

AN
ANSWER
TO THE
EXCEPTIONS

Made against the
L^d B^p of *Oxford's* Charge,
By Mr. *L.* and Dr. *Brett.*

*In which the Justice and Reasonableness of the
Bishop's Advice to his Clergy is vindicated:*

I. As to the Church's not being Independent
on the State.

But more particularly and at large is shewn from
Scripture, Fathers, and other Authorities,

II. That a Proper Sacrifice of the Bread and
Wine in the Eucharist:

III. That Sacerdotal Absolution by a Judicial
Sentence, are no Doctrines of the Catholic
Church, nor of the Church of *England.*

To which is added,

IV. A short Account of the Sense of the Church
of *England*, as to the *Validity of Lay-Baptism.*

With an APPENDIX of some Authentick Declaration,
of the Two Universities; of King *James I.* and of se-
veral Bishops in several Ages, concerning this last
Point.

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l. 9. as this. P. 23. l. 34. *επισκοπία*. P. 25. l. 15. r. *ἀπο-
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An

An Answer to the Exceptions
made against the Lord Bishop
of OXFORD's Charge, by
Mr. L. and Dr. B. &c.

SOME Men who were born, baptized, and educated in Part, among the Dissenters; upon coming over to the Communion of the Church of *England*, have betray'd such a Want of steady Thoughts, and sound Judgment, as to run eagerly into the Remoter Extreme. And in several Particulars have advanced so near to the Church of *Rome*, as to become suspected of a strong Inclination to it. And the rather, in that their Zeal has been so warm in these Matters, that our Bishops cannot preach, or give their Charge to their Clergy, according to the Principles and Sentiments of their Fore-fathers; but these Men will be nibbling at them with their *Considerations* and Exceptions.

The Lord Bishop of *Oxford* having taken some Notice of these Things in a modest, tender, and very respectful Charge to his Clergy, at his late Visitation of his Diocese: Presently out comes Mr. L. in Print, with a new Charge to his Lordship, under the Title of, *The Bishop of Oxford's Charge considered*. And for Fear the Clergy or Laity should lay too long under the Influence of his Lordship's Sentiments, before the Antidote could be

prepared ; early Advertisements were published, giving the World Notice what they were suddenly to expect. And when this *Humble Address* to his Lordship comes out, it begins with a sly but severe Invektive against some of our Clergy , whom he calls *reputedly Learned and Orthodox Divines, who have explained away* , as he thinks , *the natural Sense and Meaning of our Church's Doctrine* , and *who openly excuse and promote the Cause of schismatical and rebellious Republicans*. And notwithstanding what this Gentleman has said in the very same Page , of the *Obligation that lies upon the People* , to submit to their *Spiritual Governors the Bishops* , and the *Authority of Christ vested in them* : Yet it is evident to all who know what he has printed before, that some even of the Bishops are not exempted from this scandalous Imputation. And all this chiefly because they have opposed such Principles and such Perverse Explanations of our Church's Doctrines, whereby some of Mr. L.'s dearest Friends have espoused the Interests of an Attainted and Abjured Pretender to the Throne ; and not only refused the Oath of Allegiance to the Queen, but even separated from the Communion of our Church, and to this Day maintain and continue that Separation.

But I design to confine my self to the particular Exceptions made against the Lord Bishop of Oxford's Charge. Which Mr. L. has reduced under these Four Heads.

- I. The Independency of the Church upon the State.
- II. A proper Sacrifice in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
- III. The Nature and Necessity of Sacerdotal Absolution.
- IV. The Invalidity of Baptism administered by Persons not Episcopally ordained.

I. The

1. The first Thing taken Notice of respects the *Independency of the Church upon the State*; which his Lordship had observed to have been asserted in a manner *savouring too much of Popery*, and tending to overthrow the Foundation upon which the Reformation proceeded. Here Mr. L., p. 6, 7, &c. and after him Dr. B. in an Appendix, p. 94, 95. tell the Bishop, That the Asserters of this Doctrine intend and maintain it only in Matters purely Spiritual; and that this is not Popery, but the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and of the Church of England in its 37th Article, and the first Canons of our Church. If they would stedfastly hold to this, that they would assert no other Independency on the State, than what the 37th Article, and the Canons of our Church assert, it would be easy to shew, that the Bishop and his Animadverters and Censors are all of one Mind and Doctrine. But has nothing more than this been pretended? And were the Bishop's Cautions and Admonitions altogether groundless? What do these Gentlemen think of some Claims that have been made in Cases that are not purely Spiritual? What do they think of denying the Civil Power the Authority of depriving some Bishops and Presbyters of their Bishopricks and Benefices, for not taking the Oath of Allegiance to the Government under which they live? What do they think of claiming a Divine Right of calling Synods and making Canons, even under Christian Princes, independent on the State? And what is it that Mr. L. p. 8. seems to claim for the Church, by Virtue of Christ's Example, in appointing his own spiritual Officers, and giving them Authority to act under him, without asking leave of the Jewish or Roman State; and of putting in Execution his Commission, without any Dependence but on him alone? When we know what particular Acts of Power and Authority they will claim under these Expressions,

we shall the better know what Hope we may have of an Accommodation in these Respects. If they mean no more than the Articles declare, *that Princes by their Supreme Authority have not a Power of ministering God's Word and Sacraments, in the Ministration of which Men act in the Name of Christ, and by his Commission and Authority, and not by the Princes only* : If they mean no more than this, all will be well, and we shall soon agree. But if, because the Original of our Power in these Sacred Ministrations is from Christ, and not from the Civil Magistrate, they will therefore claim Authority not only of Ordaining and Consecrating, but even of Appointing or nominating the Priests to be ordained, and the Bishops to be consecrated; and also under this Cover exempt the Bishops and Priests from being deprived by the State of their Spiritual Benefices; if they will claim by Virtue of Christ's Commission a Divine Right of calling their own Councils and Synods; of enforcing their own Canons and Constitutions upon the People, and of putting them in Execution, independently on the State, and not only without asking them leave, but by a Divine Charter of Exemption from the Jurisdiction and Controul of the Civil Magistrate: If they will bring all these Things under the Phrase of *Matters purely Spiritual*, then it's plain, that however we may seem to agree in Words, yet we widely differ in the Explanation of them. What Claims of this Kind have been made, none can be ignorant who have read the Treatises printed in Defence of the late Deprived Bishops; and that call'd *the Regale and Pontificate*; and the *Municipium Ecclesiasticum*, asserting the Divine Right of Synods; with other Tracts by the same Author. In which not only the Reformation has been plainly struck at as proceeding upon *Erastian* Principles; but the Supremacy of the Crown, as established by Law,

is set forth as the greatest Spiritual Slavery and Usurpation upon the Church's Divine and Sacred Rights. And the worst of Language has been given to the Defenders of it, as infamous *Betrayers* of all our Religious Liberties. And all this by those who have subscribed to the Articles and Canons in which that Supremacy has been taught and maintained; and in which *Excommunication*, *ipso facto*, is denounced against those who shall impeach any Part of it; besides the Penalties of Deprivation to be inflicted by the Temporal Authority. But as I had much rather compose our Differences than widen the Breaches already made; I will leave it to Mr. L. and Dr. B. and their Friends, to explain themselves when ever they think it proper. And only add that as any Tendency to dispute the Supremacy of the Crown, even in Spiritual Causes, apparently favours too much of Popery, I cannot see what Rebuke his Lordship has merited in affectionately warning his Clergy of the Evil and Danger of it.

II. The next Doctrine mentioned by the Bishop, and in which He is also called to Account, concerns the *Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*. Which some having affirmed to be a *Proper Sacrifice*, and even *Propitiatory* to take away Sin; his Lordship thought he had good Reason to obviate so gross a Mistake and so dangerous an Error; and accordingly he gives his Clergy a Caution against it. Upon this Dr. B. and Mr. L. have entred the Lists with him, and maintain it to be a *Proper Material Sacrifice*, and as Mr. L. expresses it, *Pag. 13, 14, 15. a Means of Remission of Sin*. Now as the Reasonableness of the Bishop's Caution and Admonition must depend upon the Unreasonableness and Falshood of the Doctrine that his Lordship censures, I shall examine this Matter very particularly,

B 3

ly,

ly, and with all the Fairness and Justice that may be. To which End I must take notice,

1. That the Dispute is not about the Use of the Word *Sacrifice* when we speak of the Sacrament. And therefore Dr. B. indeed does nothing, when he cites (*Append. p. 98.*) several Bishops, and the Learned *Casaubon*, acknowledging this Sacrament to be a Sacrifice. No body disputes against the Language, if it be used with respect to the whole Office, or Service, as it is the Representation and Memorial of Christ's Sacrifice. The Apostle calls both Prayers and Alms by the Name of Sacrifice, *Heb. xiii. 15, 16.* ; and therefore an Office that so eminently consists of such Devotions, may without scruple be called by that Name. But then, so far as a *Proper Sacrifice* includes a *Material* one, it is thus far only *Improperly* call'd a *Sacrifice* by the Divines of the Reformation.

2. Tho' we do not disallow that Word, yet it is, I think, very justly to be complained of, that several such Expressions have been used by the Writers on that Side, as the common People, who have an equal Share in, and Right to this Divine Ordinance, may easily be ensnared by ; and very excusably take to be used in Imitation and Favour of the Popish Mass. And if some Men had a sufficient Regard to the Capacities of the common People, and a just Tenderness not to ensnare them by Words, they would be more cautious of such Language ; which however it were used among the Ancients, who knew one anothers Spiritual Meaning, is now become so peculiarly the Support of the greatest Corruptions of Popery, that it ought to be conscientiously avoided by all Christians. Such are the Expressions of *Sacrificing Christ* ; of *Offering the Body and Blood of Christ an Offering for Sin*, in the Representations of *Bread and Wine, to Put God in mind*, and to render him *Propitious*.
That

That the *great Christian Sacrifice* is not to be Performed by a Representation, but by a Real Sacrifice, and by Offering Christ. That it is not the Sacrament but this *Sacrifice that is the Means of our obtaining Remission of Sin*. This is so perfectly the Language of the *Roman Mass*, that the Use of it must be a Snare to the People, and bring them into the Danger either of a Prophane Contempt of what they do not understand, or else of falling into the grossest Superstition. And by setting them thus near to the *Roman Missal*, they may the more easily be persuaded to step into it, while they find the Distance between the Church of *Rome* and such Protestants to be but very little. Our first Reformers used a different Stile; they called the Sacrament, *a Sacrifice*, but not to Put God in mind, as tho he was more likely to be Forgetful than we; but a Sacrifice of *Praise and Thanksgiving*; ordained by Christ, as Archbishop Cranmer tells us, to put us in Remembrance of the Sacrifice made by him on the Cross; and for that cause it beareth the Name of a *Sacrifice*. And agreeable to this was the Language of the Primitive Christians, who as *Justin Martyr* tells us, *Apol. 2. p. 98.* in celebrating this Sacrament put one another in mind of the Passion and Sufferings of Christ for our Sins. But we it seems have alter'd both our Expressions and Principles. But,

3dly, The chief Dispute is, Whether this Sacrament be a *Proper Sacrifice* and *Propitiatory* for Sin.

By a *Proper Sacrifice*, all agree must be meant a *Material* one, a Sacrifice in which some *Material* Thing is offer'd up unto God. And the short of the Question is, Whether the Sacramental Bread and Wine are thus offered as a *Proper Sacrifice*? Mr. L. says, *it has not only been warmly asserted, but firmly proved.* (*Bp. of Oxford's Charge consider'd*, page 14.) On the other hand, I am so far from thinking it firmly proved, that I look on it as ut-

terly incapable of firm Proof ; and that for these Reasons, which I shall set forth at large.

I. There is nothing of it in the Original Institution.

II. The other Scriptures brought in Defence of it, are nothing to the Purpose of it.

III. The Primitive Christians do not appear to have been of this Opinion : In that all their Expressions that seem to look that way, are only *Metaphors* and *Allegories*, and were design'd to be taken in a Spiritual Sense.

IV. The Church of England is evidently against it.

I. I will begin with the Words of the Institution ; for if little or nothing be found of this *Material Sacrifice* there, all the rest that can be said upon it will be very little or nothing to the Purpose. Now the Words of the Institution are these : (*Matth. xxvi. 26, &c. Mark xiv. 22. Luke xxii. 19.*) *And as they were eating, Jesus took Bread and Blessed it, and Brake it, and gave it to the Disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you, Do this in Remembrance of me. Likewise also after Supper, he took the Cup, and when he had given Thanks, he gave it them, saying, Drink ye all of it : For this Cup is the New Testament in my Blood, which is shed for you ; or, This is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the Remission of Sins.* Now how many Thousand Times might an Indifferent Person read these Words over, before he would ever think of making this Bread and Wine a *Material Sacrifice* to God ? But says Mr. L. p. 19, 20. *These Elements, Words and Actions thus exhibited before God in Representation, and as a Memorial of Christ's Allsufficient Sacrifice, make this a Material Sacrifice.* He must mean this of what Christ himself did, or else he could have

no Reason to say, that the Priest, by Performing the Actions which Christ performed, and by speaking the Words that Christ spake in consecrating these Elements, offers them unto God. If there was no Sacrifice made by Christ himself in the first Consecration of these Elements, there can be none made by the Priests in consecrating after his Example. The whole Question then now in Debate, is, Whether what Christ did to or with these Elements, in the Original Consecration and Institution, made them a Material Oblation and Sacrifice? If not, this whole Cause, in my Opinion, sinks to the ground at once. Now there are but Six Things said or done by Christ to or with these Elements, in the Consecration and Institution of this Holy Supper. 1. He Took the Bread and also the Cup. 2. He Blessed them, or Gave God Thanks over them; and as they were to be eaten and drank, he Praised God the Father for his Blessings, and no doubt also Prayed for his Favour and Grace. 3. He Brake the Bread. 4. He distributed them, he Gave the Bread, and he Gave the Cup. 5. He proclaimed them to be the Symbols of his Body and Blood crucified and shed for our Sins: *This is my Body, this is my Blood.* 6. Lastly, He enjoined the Perpetual Continuance and Observance of this Divine Ordinance: *Do this in Remembrance of me.* Now in which of all these will Mr. L. and his Friends place the Oblation and Sacrifice of the Elements? If they say in all of them together; I must desire them to take Notice, that the Four first are no more than what were usual with Christ at any serious and solemn Eating, and when sacrificing was not at all thought of. Thus when he fed the Five Thousand Men, Matth. xiv. 19. **He Took the Five Loaves and the Two Fishes, and looking up to Heaven, to evidence that he did all this before God, he Blessed and Brake and Gave the Loaves to his Disciples.** So again, when he

he fed the four thousand, Mark viij. 6. He took the seven Loaves and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his Disciples to set before them. And again, when Christ appeared to his Disciples after his Resurrection, and eat with them, Luke xxiv. 30. As he sat at Meat with them, he took Bread and Blessed it, and Brake, and gave it to them. Men may talk then as long as they will of Sacrificial Rites, and Words and Actions; but we see that in four of the six Things done by our Saviour in the Original Institution of this Supper, there is nothing more than the Common Solemnities of a Devout Grace before Eating. Whatsoever therefore contributes to the making it a Sacrament, must be by the addition of those other Words, *This is my Body which is given for you; this is my Blood of the New Testament which is shed for you. Do this in Remembrance of me,* or as a Memorial of me.

Now by these Words Christ Constitutes the Elements of Bread and Wine, the Symbols of his Body and Blood; in eating and drinking of which thus *Blessed, Broken, and Poured* out to this purpose; as the Disciples are put in mind of Christ's Body broken, and his Blood shed for our Sins, so are they thereby made Partakers of the Benefits of his Passion therein Represented and Commemorated. Those visible Signs thus solemnly and devoutly received, by the Operation of the Holy Ghost, exhibit to the Souls of the Worthy Receivers invisible Grace. This is the Import of *This is my Body, This is my Blood.* He proclaims them to be the Symbols by which his Passion is Commemorated, in the Participation of which we are Partakers of the Benefits of his Death. This makes it a Christian Sacrament. Had less than this been said, there had been no Evidence of any Divine Institution of a Sacrament. These Gentlemen therefore press the Words of the Institution very hard: when either there

there must not be enough said and done to make it a *Sacrament* ; or if there be, their Pregnant Imaginations will immediately improve it into a *Sacrifice* also.

What they have to offer for the Support of their Notion is, that the Word *μυστήριον* here used, *Do this*, signifies sometimes in the LXXII Greek, to Offer, or to Sacrifice. But, as when it do's so signify, it has usually either *Lamb*, or *Calf*, or *Sacrifice*, or *Oblation*, or some such-like Substantive joined with it to determine its Signification, none of which are here :

so they who mention this Sense of the Word, can only offer it in this place as *Propit. Oblat. p. 33.*

Probably intended. Now what *probably* may be, *probably* may not be, and consequently this is no Proof. Unless there had been something in our Saviour's Words that necessarily determines for this Construction, this is too slight a Foundation to build so important a Doctrine upon. Besides, if we were to take the Word in that Sense, it must be referr'd to the whole *Action* or *Service*, and not to the Elements only, for they are not joined with it. And if we do this, it will then seem rather to be taken in a Metaphorical, than in a Literal Sense, and consequently proves nothing at all for the *Material Oblation* of the Elements. And thus the Words of the Institution have nothing in them that either directly or certainly favours this pretended Material Sacrifice of Bread and Wine. But, says one of the Acutest Defenders of this Cause, *I am perswaded that the Propitiatory Nature of the Holy Eucharist is as plainly contained in those Words as any Rational Man can desire.* When our Saviour says, *This is my Body given for you*, he must mean *given to God*, — And if the Bread in the Sacrament be his Body given, offered, sacrificed for us, by a true and proper Representation, then I cannot see how the Consequence can be avoided, viz. that the

the Consecrated Bread and Wine are a Representative Oblation or Sacrifice of his Body and Blood. For it would be a Poor Representative indeed, if it fell short of its Principal or Original in the main Point of all. If it represented Christ only as Dead, not as Sacrificed; only as Crucified, not as Offered unto God for us. — *The same Body which is Broken is also given for us, which is to me an Unanswerable Proof that his Representative, Sacramental Body, is also his Body offered for us.* This looks plausible, and is indeed carrying the Argument as far as the Cause will bear. But still it is rather begging than proving the Point in Debate. And the Whole will be determined by a clear Answer to this plain Question: Whether Christ Instituted the Representation and Commemoration of his Death by a Sacrifice, or by a Sacrament, or if you will by both? If by a Sacrament only, then it is undeniable that the Words *This is my Body*, &c. can only make the Elements the Symbols of his Body and Blood, but do not by any Necessary or Reasonable Consequence include a Sacrifice or Oblation of them. Now in all this we must be determined by what Christ here appointed and declared.

That he has Instituted a Sacrament, we all agree; of the Sacrifice, the Institution says not a word. This therefore is so far from being plainly contained in the Words of the Institution, that it wants the one Thing necessary to make it plain: I mean some plain Account of the Oblation of these Elements to God, which the bare Saying, *This is my Body*, never can include, unless it be first proved that there can be no Sacrament without a Sacrifice. If God then intended to Institute a Sacrifice, we ought in such a Positive Institution to have had some plain and indisputable Proofs of that Oblation, of which the Institution gives us none. Nor is it of any force at all to pretend that *the Representation is Defective in the main Point of all.*

P. 41.

Christ

Christ was the Properest Judge how his Death should be represented. If he had Reasons that it should be done by a Sacrament, and not by a Sacrifice; and if all Consent in the One, and the Institution takes no Notice of the Other, we ought to acquiesce, and be determined by that. Besides, I know of no other Oblation or Sacrifice that Christ ever made to God of his Body and Blood, than what he once made by his Passion on the Cross. If therefore this Sacrament be a sufficient Memorial of his Passion, it is also a sufficient Memorial of his Sacrifice. This Gentleman, I know, makes a difference between the Death of Christ, and his Sacrifice; between the Crucifying of his Body, and the Offering it up for us. But as Christ offered himself to God but once, and by that one Offering hath put away Sins, and Reconciled us to God by the Cross, and hath made Peace through the Blood of his Cross, Heb. ix. 28. x. 12. 14. Eph. 2. 16. Col. 1. 20. I cannot but think, that what he has appointed as a Memorial or Representation of his Death, is also a sufficient Memorial of that one Offering or Sacrifice which he made of himself to God by dying for us. And consequently, that the Sacramental Memorial or Representation of his Passion, is a sufficient Memorial or Representation also of his Sacrifice, without either Offering or Sacrificing the Symbols. To put then such a Construction on the Words, as they will in no Use or Propriety of Language bear, only to make the pretended Representation to our Thoughts more compleat and full; is Devising a Sacrifice for God and Christ, which they do not appear to have intended or appointed.

But this Author, justly sensible of the Weakness of what he has thus alleged, endeavours to strengthen it by saying that (P. 15.) *'Tis most likely that the Bread and Wine in which Christ first celebrated the Eucharist, had been actually offered in the Temple. For it has*
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already been proved, that the Passover which our Saviour and his Apostles had just afore been eating, was a Sacrifice: and it is clear, that every Sort of Sacrifice had a Meat and Drink-offering of course attending it. And so, if the Elements had been once Offered unto God before, there was no need of a New Oblation of them in the Institution of this Sacrament. To this I Answer, That this is said without Proof, and is a mere groundless Conjecture. It is not certain that the Elements used by Christ in the first Celebration of this Supper, were any Part of what had been used in the Passover eaten by Christ and his Apostles. No less a Man than the Learned *Ger. Jo. Vossius* is of Opinion, (*Harm. Evang. l. i. c. xiv. p. 110.*) that when Christ and his Apostles had eaten up the Paschal Lamb, it was not enough to satisfy the hunger of so many, and that therefore their Common Supper followed it; during the time of which Christ washed the Disciples Feet before he Instituted this Sacrament. And he supports himself in that Assertion by the Authority of *St. Austin. lib. de Consensu Evangelistarum. Peractâ Paschali cænâ & communi inceptâ, illis cœnantibus surrexit Christus & lavit pedes discipulorum. Ac similiter idem tractatu lv in Joannem.* Now if this be true, which *St. Austin* observes by comparing the Evangelists together, it is so far from being credible, that the Elements which Christ consecrated and used in that first Supper, were ever offered up unto God in the Temple, that they rather appear to have been no Part of that Paschal Supper which Christ in Compliance with the Jewish Law had eaten with his Apostles; but of that common ordinary Supper which they are thought to have eaten after it. And consequently nothing can from hence be fetcht to support the Doctrine of Christ's having made an Oblation to God of those Sacramental Elements.

But Dr. Hickee says, (*Christian Priesth. Ed. 3. p. 54.*) that the *Ancients* believed that our Lord made an Oblation of the Bread and Wine at the Institution of this Sacrament, and commanded his Disciples so to do; and he represents this as a thing past all Doubt from the 63^d Epistle of St. Cyprian to Cæcilius, &c. I have look'd into that Epistle, but do not think this Matter so much past all Doubt as it is represented. And yet if it were, I do not think that of Moment enough to determine this Matter. Because if any of the Ancients were of that Opinion, as it is plain there is nothing of it in Holy Scripture, they must receive it by Tradition only, which I cannot think to be of it self alone a sufficient Foundation of so important a Doctrine. I do not speak this as tho' I apprehended any mighty Matters from the Ancients against me, and so were desirous to decline their Testimonies. So far from it, that I am abundantly convinced that the Fathers had no such Sentiments, as that the Sacramental Elements were offered by Christ as a material Sacrifice to God, however their Words have been wrested and tortured and perverted to that Purpose. But I shall wave this Enquiry into their Sentiments till by and by, that I may take the Judgment of the Fathers together, and by comparing them one with another, shew the Reader very plainly, that they say very little or nothing to the Purpose for which they are produced. At present I am contented to observe, that as the Institution of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper may, I hope, be allowed sufficiently Intelligible without the Interpretation of the Fathers: So there is nothing at all either in the *Words* or *Actions* used by our Saviour in it, that discovers any Oblation of the Bread and Wine to God. The *Manual Ceremonies*, as they call them, were little more than what were usual at every Solemn Eating. And the Words seem as few
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as possible to constitute a Christian Sacrament of Perpetual Obligation. And without any one Hint, or Intimation by any Gesture or Expression as to the Oblation or Sacrificing the Bread and Wine. And I am perswaded that Dr. *Hickes* himself is pretty much of my Mind, from the Method which he takes to maintain this Doctrine. Who, as he himself confesses, did not think it proper to argue this Point *à priori*, beginning at the Institution: (*Account of the 3d Edit. p. xxiiij.*) but from the Consistent Tradition of the Catholic Church both in Doctrine and Practice, and from many Texts of Scripture, as understood by the best Christian Writers; from whence he thinks it must follow, that it was a Proper Sacrifice from the very Institution. If this be all, I must insist upon it, that Mr. L. can have none of his pretended firm Proofs from the Original Institution. Proceed we then to consider,

II. What firm Proofs of this New Doctrine can be fetcht from other Texts of Scripture. It may perhaps be thought an Uncivil Remark if I tell the Reader that the Texts appealed to in this Cause, are the same that the Church of Rome produce in Defence of their Mass. But in the main this is true; as it is also, that by the very same Rule which they observe in Interpreting Scripture, 'tis as easy to prove the Mass as the Material Sacrifice of Bread and Wine.

I. The first Text that I find mentioned by Dr. *Hickes* is that of St. Matt. v. 23, 24. *If thou bring thy Gift to the Altar, and there Remembrest that thy Brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy Gift before the Altar and go thy way; first be Reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.* This, say the Asserters of a Proper Sacrifice, (*Christ. Priesth. p. 42, 43.*) is a Gospel-Precept, spoken by way of Anticipation, and by the Fathers is applied to the Christian Sacrament of the Lord's-

Lord's-Supper. Be it so, granting all this, what then? Why, the Precept teaches us to be reconciled with our offended Brethren, before we can hope to offer any acceptable Sacrifice: And *St. Chrysostom*, and other Fathers apply this to the Holy Sacrament. I grant all this, and so doubtless have Thousands of Divines since their Time, without ever intending the Bread and Wine to be that Sacrifice. The only Question is, Whether *Gift* and *Altar* were intended by our Saviour so to be understood, as to make the Sacramental Elements a material proper Sacrifice in the strict literal Sense of the Words. And how will this be proved? The first Authority brought by *Dr. Hickes* from the Ancients, declares expressly in Favour of the Metaphorical Sense. *Δωεον δε, &c. Apostol. Const. L. 2. cap. 53. For the Gift that is offered unto God, is every one's Prayer and Thanksgiving.* *St. Chrysostom* expatiates largely with his usual Eloquence in our Saviour's own Phrase of *Gift*, and *Sacrifice*, and *Altar*; and he applies it to the Holy Sacrament. But then to demonstrate that all such Language is to be understood figuratively: He expressly affirms, that *Reconciliation with our Brethren is a Sacrifice*, and that *one of the two Reasons of this Precept is to teach us that this is accounted the greatest Sacrifice*; ταύτην μέγιστον ἱεράται εἶνα τὴν θυσίαν, &c. And he applies it to the very Alms and Devotions of the *Catechumeni*. Let those hear this — who are not yet initiated, for this Text has Relation also to them; for they also bring a *Gift* and a *Sacrifice*, I mean *Prayer* and *Alms*; for that this also is a *Sacrifice*, hear what the Prophet says, the *Sacrifice of Praise shall glorify me*; and again, *sacrifice to God the Sacrifices of Praise, and the lifting up of my Hands is an Evening Sacrifice*. And then he sets forth the Unprofitableness of *Prayer* without *Reconciliation*. Such *Sacrifice* the unbaptized offered; and
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yet it is most certain that they could not sacrifice the Bread and Wine, and consequently these Words were spoken figuratively 'Tis true he makes a Difference between the Sacrifice of the Baptized and of the Unbaptized. But let Dr. H. prove, if he can, that the Difference consisted in the Oblation of Bread and Wine. 'Till I look'd into St. *Chrysostom* I did not suspect Dr. *Hickes* of such a Breach of Integrity, as the industriously suppressing these plain Discoveries, that what that Father says, was all intended figuratively, and of Spiritual Oblations only. If he had gone on but a little farther, he had evidently betray'd the Weakness of this pretended Authority from St. *Chrysostom's* Exposition of the Place.

Another Text produced is 1 Cor. ix. 14, 15. Where St. Paul to shew how reasonable it was, and agreeable to the Will of God, that Christian Ministers should be maintained with worldly Maintenance for their Labour in the Ministry, argues thus from what was under the Law. *Do ye not know that they who minister about Holy Things, live of the Things of the Temple; and they which wait at the Altar, are Partakers with the Altar? Even so hath the Lord also ordained, that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.* Now what is all this to the Sacramental Elements of Bread and Wine? The *Jews* had their Temple Service, for their Attendance on which the Priests had their Maintenance. And they had *Proper Altars, Proper Sacrifices, and Proper Oblations*, for waiting on which the Priests had their Share. (*Christ. Priesth. p. 68.*) But does St. Paul say, that the Christians had so too? Nothing like it. But only that as under the *Levitical Priesthood* the Priests were maintained for their Labour and Service: So ought the Christian Ministers to be for their Pains and Labour in
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preaching the Gospel. Sure the Cause must be carried only by a Number of Citations, and not by the Perrinency of them, when such poor Arguments as these are brought to support it. Here also we have a heavy Heap of Ancients introduced, speaking what they never thought, as I shall shew in its proper Place. It's Answer enough, I think, to any Argument pretended to be brought from this Scripture: That St. Paul does not here say any one thing directly of the Bread and Wine in the Holy Sacrament. But if some Divines can never meet the Words *Altar, Gift, Offering, and Sacrifice* in the New Testament, but presently they fall into Dreams of *sacrificing the Sacramental Bread and Wine*; we must leave them to their own Delusion.

Another Text largely insisted on in this Controversy is that of *Heb. xiii. 10.* where the Apostle says, *We have an Altar whereof they have no right to eat that serve the Tabernacle.* This was alledged above a Hundred Years ago, by one Hart a Jesuit, in Defense of the Popish Mass. And the main Force of the Allegation lay in St. Paul's taking these Words, as the Jesuit pretended, so far in a literal Sense, as that the *Altar* must be intended to denote a *Material Altar*, and consequently include a Proper Material Sacrifice offered on that Altar, just thus also pleads Dr. Hickes; (*Christ. Priesth. p. 73.*) *An Altar implies an Altar-Sacrifice, as the Jews had; and the Apostle uses an Argument taken from their own Law. So here is Altar answering to Altar, and Sacrifice to Sacrifice, one as a Figure of Christ's sacrificing on the Cross before his Suffering, and answering to the other after it.* This I confess looks pretty, and makes the Allusion fine, and pleasant, and beautiful. But is this a sufficient Reason for carrying on the Allusion so far? I doubt not. To this way of

interpreting St. Paul, the Learned Dr. John Reynolds in his Conference with that Jesuit, gave this Answer, Pag. 474. Ed. 1588. *The Holy Apostle himself doth understand it of the Body of Christ, as it was offered on the Cross. And that is manifest by the Words he addeth to shew his Meaning, touching the Jews and the Altar. For, says he, the Bodies of those Beasts, &c. Which Words are somewhat dark, but they will be plain, if we consider both the Thing that the Apostle would prove, and the Reason by which he proveth it. The Thing that he would prove is, That the Jews cannot be Partakers of the Fruit of Christ's Death, &c. if they still retain the Ceremonial Worship of the Law of Moses: And the Reason by which he proveth it, is an Ordinance of God in a kind of Sacrifices appointed by the Law to be offered for Sinners, which Sacrifices shewed Christ, and taught this Doctrine. — There were certain Beasts commanded to be offered for Sin in special Sort, and their Blood to be brought into the Holy Place, whose Bodies might not be eaten, as other Sacrifices were, but must be burnt without the Camp. Now by these Sacrifices offered for Sin, our only Sovereign Sacrifice Jesus Christ was figured. — The Apostle therefore exhorting the Hebrews to stablish their Hearts with Grace, that teacheth them to serve the Lord in Spirit and Truth, after the Doctrine of the Gospel; not with Meats, that is to say, with the Ceremonies of the Law, a part whereof was the Difference between unclean and clean Meats, doth move them to it with this Reason; that if they serve the Tabernacle, and stick unto the Rites of the Jewish Priesthood, their Souls shall have no Part of the Fruit of our Sacrifice, no Fruit of Christ's Death. For as the Bodies of those Beasts, which were offered for Sin, and their Blood brought into the Holy Place by the Priest, might not be eaten by the Priests, but were burnt without the Camp: So neither may the Keepers of the Priestly Ceremonies have Life by feeding upon Christ, who (to shew this Mystery) did suffer Death without the Gate,*

Gate, when he shed his Blood to cleanse the People from their Sin. And thus it appeareth by the Text it self, that the Name of Altar betokeneth the Sacrifice, that is to say, Christ crucified. Not as his Death is shewed forth in the Sacrament, but as he did suffer Death without the Gate. Let Dr. *Hickes* try his Skill to overthrow this Interpretation of the Place. And until he has done that, an Expression of mere Analogy and Allusion can prove nothing of the pretended Material Sacrifice.

But before I quit this Passage I must observe, that now the Christians came to be informed, that all former Sacrifices were abolished, and that the Divine Service and Worship of Christians by Spiritual Sacrifices was a much more effectual way of obtaining God's Favour: They indulged themselves in a Liberty of applying the sacrificial Language to the spiritual Service and Sacrifices of Christians. *Alms* are called *Offerings* or *Oblations*, *Act. xxiv. 17.* and *Charity* is spoken of as *Sacrifice*, *Heb. xiii. 15, 16.* And *Praise* a *Sacrifice* to God, and *the Fruit* or *Burnt-offering of our Lips.* (*vid. Whitby in loc.*) And it was useful and instructive to the Christians so to do, as the Prophets on some Occasions had for the same Reason done before them. It took them off from the Opinion they had had of their old Oblations, and disposed them to be more hearty in their Spiritual Devotion. In which they go so far as to call all Christians *Royal Priesthood*, and say that we *are made Priests to God*, *1 Pet. ii. 9.* and that Christ is *our High Priest*, *Rev. 6. 10.* Now when the common Adversaries of our Faith from such Expressions, plead for a common Right of all Christians to officiate in the Holy Offices and Ministrations of the Church: Dr. *Hickes* knows very well what Reply is to be made to them. And let him but say the same thing to his own Plea, from the figura-

tive Expressions of *Altar*, *Eating*, and the *Lord's Table*, and *Gift*, &c. and he needs no other Answer. All this plainly shews, how little Force there is in any such Citations of our Appeals to Scripture Texts in this Cause; unless the Argument and Force of the Discourse requires them to be taken in a literal Sense.

And if the Primitive Church and Fathers afterwards, from such an Example of this of *St. Paul*, were free in borrowing the sacrificial Language and Expressions; and while they understood one another perfectly well, to intend the spiritual Sacrifices and Oblations only, either in the Eucharist or out of it, did yet speak of this new Christian Sacrifice, as the *Jews* used to do of their bloody and material ones: It would be the greatest Injury to them imaginable to take all this in that literal Meaning, which they themselves have plainly enough discovered, was never intended by them. And yet in this lays all the mighty Matter of the Sense and Testimony of the Ancients, which some Persons make so great a Noise about. But before I proceed to this, there are other Texts alledged and to be taken notice of, *Christ. Priesth.* p. 80. And one is that of *St. Paul*, 1 Cor. x. 20, 21. *But the Things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to Devils and not to God, and I would not that ye should have Fellowship with Devils. Ye cannot drink of the Cup of the Lord, and of the Cup of Devils. Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table, and of the Table of Devils.* In which Words the Apostle's main Design is to dissuade the Christians from being present at the idolatrous Sacrifices and Feasts of the *Gentiles*. And the Argument which he uses to that Purpose is this, That those *Gentile* Solemnities were looked on as means of Communion with their false Gods, whom he here calls Devils. And it was not fit that they

who

who had a real Communion with God in the Christian Sacrament, should have Fellowship with Devils also in their idolatrous Sacrifices and Feasts. This is all that the Apostle aimed at. Now how will this at all prove that they sacrificed the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament, p. 86? Why, *the Parallel between these Feasts* alluded to may be observed in several Respects. But does the Apostle's Admonition require this Parallel to hold good in any other Sense besides this one; that they were both accounted means of Religious Communion with the Deity that each of them worshipped? If the Christians have Communion with God in the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper; St. Paul's Admonition and Argument is good and of just Force, and requires not that it should be carried any farther. And therefore all the Pains that is taken to bring the Allusion and Parallel beyond this, is only running Divisions on them to amuse the Reader, and give Colour to a weak Cause. Which as it does not appear that St. Paul ever intended, because the Argument which he uses does not require it; so in Reality it proves nothing of what Dr. Hickes brings it for. Nor can this Text be of any Moment in this Dispute, till it can be made appear, either that the Christian Feast must needs be the Remainder of a Sacrifice, because the *Gentile* Feasts were so: Or else that there is no real Communion with God in a Sacrament, but in a Sacrifice only. And when this is attempted to be proved, it will be time enough to answer it.

There remains, I think, now but one Text more to be considered; (*ib.* 92.) and it is *Rom* xv. 16. where the Apostle calls himself, *λειτεργὸν ἱερουργίας*, the *ministring Priest* of Jesus Christ, *ministring to the Gentiles the Gospel of God*, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by

the Holy Ghost. Where the Apostle is supposed to speak in *Allusion to the Sacrament which was sanctified by the Invocation of the Holy Ghost*, and by these *sacri-ficial Terms* to teach us that it is a proper Sacrifice. But as the pretended Allusion is wholly conjectural and precarious, and has no Proof; and it cannot be pretended that any of the ancient Fathers have ever applied this Text to the Holy Sacrament, I think it wants no Answer. And let not Dr. *Hickes* think that I have done any Injury, either to him, or to his Cause, that I have not in examining these Scriptures, followed him $\kappa\tau\pi\sigma\alpha$, through all his Learned Readings and Quotations. For as all solid Scripture Proofs must be fetch'd from what the Holy Penmen do either directly affirm, or from what may reasonably be inferr'd from thence; and the Sentiments of the Ancients are not always the most justly and properly applied to the Scriptures which they appeal to, as it is easy to shew by a great many Instances; I cannot but think it a proper and sufficient Answer to all the Texts of Scripture produced to support this Cause, to shew from the Scheme and Scope of the Apostles Discourses, that they have no Appearance of intending the Sacramental Elements as a Sacrifice; but seem much rather to use sacrificial Expressions and Phrases metaphorically. And until some good and substantial Reasons can be given, why these Texts are to be taken literally rather than figuratively, they can never possibly prove any thing of what is now pretended to be proved from them. And altho' I am sensible that the main Stress and Support of this Cause lies in such an Application of the Expressions of the Fathers to the Places of Scripture here produced; Yet upon a fair and impartial Examination of them, I persuade my self that every unprejudiced Reader will soon perceive that there is

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nothing in all this but wresting Words and Expressions to a literal Meaning, that were intended to be taken figuratively only. To make this good I proceed therefore,

III. To enquire what the Sentiments of the Ancient Fathers and of the Primitive Church were as to this Sacrament.

Now the first Authorities of this Kind, that Dr. Hickes has thought fit to mention, are two or three short Passages in the Epistle of *Clemens Romanus*, and *Ignatius*. *Clemens Romanus*, §. 40. says, *These Things then being manifested to us ; we who have looked into the Depths of Divine Knowledge, ought to do all Things in order, which our Lord has commanded us to do.* To perform our [*προσφορὰς καὶ λειτουργίας*] Offerings and Services or Ministrations at the appointed Seasons. For these he has commanded to be done, not confusedly and disorderly, but at the appointed Times and Hours. — They therefore who make their Offerings [*ποιῦντες τὰς προσφορὰς αὐτῶν*] at the appointed Seasons, are happy and accepted, and following the Commandments of God are free from Sin. And again, §. 44. Censuring some who would have deposed their Minister, he says, *It would be no small Sin in us, should we cast out those from their Ministry, or if Dr. Hickes had rather have it so, from their Episcopacy, who unblameably and holily offer the Gifts.* *προσενέχοντες τὰ ἕστα.* To these let me add a parallel Passage out of *Ignatius*, ad *Smyrn.* c. 8. *It is not lawful without the Bishop either to Baptize, or ἀγάπην ποιεῖν, to make the Love-feast ; by which he assuredly means the Celebration of the Holy Sacrament.* Now as these Passages are mentioned to prove the Material Sacrifice of the Bread and Wine, to the clear understanding of them we must consider,

I. That these Holy Fathers by the Phrases, *Offering of Gifts, Performing Gifts and Sacrifices*, and the like,

like, do intend in these Places the whole Ministerial Office in general, or at least the whole Service of the Church. When *St. Clement* says, *we ought to perform our Offerings and Ministrations orderly, and at the appointed Seasons*; he means that the whole *Divine Service of the Church* ought to be so performed. They who *make their Offerings* at the appointed Seasons are happy, *i. e.*) they who regularly observe the appointed Times of the Church's Service. Which *Dr. Hickes* might, if he would, have considered as a sufficient Reason, why the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of *Lincoln* translated that Expression of offering their Gifts by *fulfilling the Duty of their Ministry*. (*Account of the 3d Edit. pag. xxxiv.*) It was the general Office of their Ministration that *St. Clement* intended, and was therefore chiefly to be regarded in the Translation of the Place. And the literal Rendering was so far from being intended to be suppressed, that it was plainly put in the Margin. But some Persons can speak candidly of nothing but what favours their own Schemes and Measures; and it is too evident that if the Author's main Design be duly attended to, these Authorities are so far from being *firm Proofs* of the *Material Oblation* or *Sacrifice* of the Elements of Bread and Wine; that I must rather observe from them,

2. That the true Import of them would have been unintelligible, and not to be explained, did they not receive Light from the known Language and Usage of the Ancient Church. We may indeed from such Authorities as these call the Christian Ministers *Offerers of Gifts* and *Makers of Love-Feasts*; but we should not be able to explain what their Gifts were, nor in what their offering them consisted, nor what their *Love-Feasts* meant, if we had not Instruction from other Passages of Antiquity.

quity. To set these Expressions then in a clear and full Light, and all others of like Nature that we may hereafter meet with, let us consider,

3. What Account the Ancients give us in other Places, of the Offerings, and Sacrifices, and Love-Fests of the Church. Now as to this,

1. They sometimes apply the Words *ἱερα* and *δωτα* to the Prayers of the Christian Congregation, and especially to the Devotion of the Communion-Service. And if they be so taken here, they are so far from proving the Proper Sacrifice of the Sacrament, that they rather prove against it; in that thus the Expressions are undeniably Figurative, and not Literal. And yet this is so far from being an uncommon Way of Speaking, or improper for these Places, that as we have seen already, when the Apostolical Constitutions speak of bringing our Gifts to the Altar, they tell us, L. 2. c. 53. *that the Gift offered unto God is every one's Prayer and Thanksgiving.* And so do's St. Chrysostom in his Exposition of Matt. v. 23. And some of the Learned Men who have written Notes on these Epistles, leave it doubtful whether the Apostolical Fathers intended hereby the Prayers of the Eucharist, or other Oblations. *Nemo veterum ita sine adjecto simpliciter locutus est; ambiguum enim velintne Primitias, gratiarum actiones, Eleemosynum, &c. Sanguis & Corpus Domini sunt dona Dei.* He leaves the Meaning doubtful. But the Learned Cotelere says, *Sacerdotes donec s. munera Deo offerunt, preces fidelium, sacrificia incrementa, Sanctam Eucharistiam.* The Priests offer Gifts to God, the Prayers of the Faithful, the unbloody Sacrifices, the Holy Eucharist. And then he refers us to Tertullian adv. Marcionem iv. 9. who speaking of that Passage of our Saviour, Matt. viij. 4. *Go thy way, and shew thy self to the Priest, and offer thy Gift as Moses commanded,* says, *for he kept to the Figurative Arguments of the Law in their own Figurative Representations; which*

which teach us, that a Man who is once a Sinner, and then cleansed by the Word of God, ought to offer his Gift to God in the Temple; viz. Prayer and Thanksgiving with the Church, by Christ Jesus the Universal Priest of the Father. Had no more been added here, but Gift and Temple, (Christian Priesth.) Dr. Hickes would have drawn all this to a Material Oblation, and would have said as he do's on the like Occasion, to be spoken of by and by; That as the Temple is here to be taken literally, so the Gift must be so too. But Tertullian has unluckily prevented him by explaining the Gift that he intended, viz. Prayer and Thanksgiving with the Church by Jesus Christ the Universal Priest of the Father. He refers us also to a Passage of Maximus apud cap. 3. Hierarchiæ Cælestis, τὰ δὲ αὐτῶν ἀρχιερέων, and to some others in the Apostolical Constitutions. One of which has already been mentioned above. And to these I may add some other Places of Tertullian, as de cultu. Fœm. c. xi. where speaking of the Christian Women going to Divine Service, he expresses it thus: *Aut sacrificium offertur, aut Dei sermo administratur.* Either Sacrifice is offered, or the Word of God is administered. But this do's no more prove that Sacrifice to be the Oblation of Bread and Wine, than the Gift to be offered in the Temple mentioned above is to be so understood. And again, de Orat. 14. speaking of the Unacceptableness of Prayer without Charity, says, *Quale Sacrificium est à quo sine Pace receditur?* What is that Sacrifice which Mengo from, without Peace or Friendship? And as the Substantives, Gift, Oblation and Sacrifice are used by the Ancients to express Prayers, so are the Verbs, Offerimus, Sacrificamus & προσφέρωμεν, to signify, we Pray for. *Non offertur pro eo, nec Sacrificium pro dormitione ejus celebraretur.* Neque enim apud Altare Dei meretur nominari in Sacerdotum prece; says Cypr. Ep. 1. Let no Prayer be put up for him, nor any Sacrifice be celebrated for

for his Rest; for he deserves not to be named at the Altar of God in the Prayer of the Priests, &c. Where all the three Words, Offer, Sacrifice and Altar are used, and yet nothing but the Prayers of the Church are intended. So also, *Sacrificamus pro salute Imperatoris, &c.* We Pray for the Safety of the Emperor. Tertull. ad Scap. cap. 2. And *προσχε μιν*, We Pray, three times in one Prayer. Ap. Const. 8. 12. We Pray or Offer to thee for all Saints, — for all this People, — for the wholesomeness of the Air, and a plenty of Fruits. Now if we are to understand the Gifts and Offerings of Clement according to this Meaning and Language, which the Primitive Church was so well acquainted with; then the Priests and Offerers of Gifts and Sacrifices here spoken of, can mean no more than Publick Ministers who offered to God the Prayers of the Church in the Publick Congregation. And thus far these Authorities can prove nothing of a Material or Proper Sacrifice in the Eucharist. But,

2. If by the Gifts and Offerings here mentioned we suppose some other Oblations besides Prayer to be intended; it will be proper to consider what the Usage or Practice of the Church as to any such was. For, as I said before, we are so far from receiving any great Instruction from these short Passages, that they themselves must be enlightned and cleared by other Authorities. Now the Practice of the Primitive Church as to its Oblations, as Dr. Cave tells us, was this. (*Prim. Christ.* p. 1. c. xi.) Before the beginning of that Service, at which the Eucharist was administered, the Custom was to Present their Offerings, every one according to his Ability bringing some Gift as the First-fruits of his Increase, which was by the Minister laid upon the Altar or Communion-Table, none of them thinking it fit to appear before the Lord empty. — These Oblations were designed for the Uses of the Church, for the Maintenance of the Ministry, and the Relief of the Poor;

Poor; especially out of them were taken the Bread and Wine for the Sacramental Elements —. Out of these Oblations also 'tis probable they took (at least sent Provisions extraordinary) to furnish the Common Feast, which in those days they constantly had at the Celebration of the Sacrament; where the Rich and the Poor feasted together at the same Table. These were called *Agapæ*, or *Love-Feasts*. And in this we see how *Ignatius* comes to express the Celebrating the Holy Sacrament by the making a *Love-Feast*.

This Account of the Primitive Oblations is confirmed by Bishop *Beveridge* in his Notes on the 3d Apostol. Canon. In the Primitive Church, according to the Injunction of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 16. 2. Offerings were made every Lord's Day by those who went into the Church. Which he confirms not only by the Authority of *Justin Martyr*, whose Words I shall consider by and by; but also by this Passage in *Tertullian's* Apol. c. 39. *Modicam unusquisque stipem menstrua die, vel cum velit, &c.* Every one offers some moderate Gift, either on the first Sunday in the Month [*menstrua die*] or when he will, and as he will, and as he can; for no body is compelled, but all give voluntarily. These are the Pledges of their Piety; which are not laid out in Dainties and Revellings, and Gluttony, but in Maintaining and Burying the Poor, and on young Children that are destitute of Parents and Estate. On ancient Servants, and shipwreck'd People, or on those who are cast into Prison, or condemned to the Mines for Conscience and Religion's sake. From which Passages together, the aforesaid Bishop leads us to observe two Sorts of Gifts or Oblations: One for the Relief of the Poor, which was laid up in the Church's Treasury or Chest; and another for the Pious Uses of the Church. Accordingly we find the Bishop directed in the Apostolical Constitutions. L. 2. c. 24. Let him employ the Tents and First-fruits which are given according

according to the Command of God, as becomes a Man of God. What is voluntarily offered for the sake of the Poor, let him bestow on Orphans and Widows, the afflicted and needy Strangers, as one who has God to call him to account, by whom this Charge is committed to him. Again; Ye Bishops preserve God's favour to you, by distributing to the Needy, and your selves using, but not abusing the Gifts of God; feeding on them, but not devouring them alone, rather communicating of them to those that be in want. Again, concerning the First-fruits and Tithes, I enjoin that all First-fruits be brought to the Bishop, and Presbyters and Deacons for their Sustaince; And that all Tithes be offered to Maintain the rest of the Clergy, the Virgins, and the Widows, and the Poor; the First-fruits belong to the Priests and Deacons that serve them. This was the Usage and Manner of the Primitive Church as to their *δραμα καὶ ἀεσποροῦ*, their Gifts and Offerings. From which we may make these following Observations. 1. That all their Contributions to Charitable and Pious Uses were called *Offerings*, and looked on as *Oblations* to God: They are so called by St. Paul, Act. 24. 17. *I came to bring Alms to my Nation and Offerings.* 2. That tho' all these Oblations were not brought to be offered up at the Altar, yet more were so offered besides the Sacramental Elements. It was not peculiar to the Bread and Wine alone to be so offered up, but other things also that were designed for the Sacred Uses of the Church; as Oil and Frankincense for Incense, and also the First-fruits of their Corn and Vineyards. All these were offered to God at the Altar as well as the Bread and Wine, as appears by the 3d Apostolical Canon. 3. That the Sacramental Bread and Wine, altho' they were thus a part of the Christian's Offerings, yet they were not thus a Sacrifice to God. Dr. Hukes seems to have been aware of this Objection, (P. 161.) and has no way to avoid it but to make

make an *Oblation* and a Sacrifice all one. But let him say what he will, there is such a certain and undeniable Difference between an Oblation and a Sacrifice; that every thing which we offer unto God for the Sacred Uses of his Church, even altho' actually offered at the Altar, is not a Sacrifice. This Distinction must be kept, or else we shall contradict the Sense both of the Ancients and the Moderns. If we do not allow it, instead of disputing about the Proper Material Sacrifice of the Bread and Wine, we must allow many more Material Sacrifices besides the Bread and Wine: For if every Oblation be a Sacrifice, then the Oil, that in the Primitive Church was offered for the Lamps and the Incense, and the *First-fruits*; and even the Money which with us the Church-Wardens gather for the Poor, must, by being offered at the Altar, become a *Real, Proper, Material Sacrifice unto God*. But this is a Notion that I do not yet find either the Ancients or the Moderns have consented in. If then the Sacramental Bread and Wine, by their being first brought to the Altar, are a part of the Church's *Oblations* only, they cannot thereby alone be made a *Sacrifice*. It must be some Subsequent Act, some New Oblation of them afterwards in the Consecration, that makes them a *Material Sacrifice*, if they be so at all; till then, they are not a Sacrifice. And if this be so, I cannot see what mighty Need there is of so warm Contentions to make the Bread and Wine an *Oblation to God* before Consecration. It seems to me to betray some Jealousy, as to what is to follow upon it; and looks as tho' they distrusted the Consecration alone as insufficient to make the Sacrifice: If not, why all this Zeal and Warmth to no purpose? And it is, I think, to no purpose to contend so earnestly for making the Bread and Wine an Oblation antecedently to their Consecration.

tion, if this alone were sufficient to make them a Proper Sacrifice. But,

4. Tho' the Sacramental Bread and Wine were, by the early Usage and Practice of the Church, taken out of the General Offerings at the Altar, yet it does not appear that that Practice was founded on any Divine Institution or Appointment of Jesus Christ. And this is an Observation that ought to be very well considered, in that it must be a Divine Law or Institution of God, and not the Churches Practice only that can make a *Proper Sacrifice*. This the very Learned Dr. Grabe, who zealously favoured the Opinion that I am writing against, was so sensible of, that he labours hard to prove this Usage to have been by Divine Institution. His Character for Learning and Knowledge was deservedly very great, and his Name is not to be mentioned without Respect. But I have not yet learned to come into the Sentiments of any Man when the Evidences are most clear against him. And that they are so in this Case, will I think sufficiently appear from what he says upon it. After he has declared *his* Opinion as to the Churches Usage in making an Offering of the Bread and Wine, both before Consecration as the First-Fruits of his Creatures, and then after it as Christ's Mystical Body; he *affirms this to have been the Practice of the Universal Church; which had been taught so to do by the Apostles, and the Apostles by Christ*. And then having refer'd us to *Justin Martyr, Irenæus, &c.* for Proofs, whose Testimonies we are to consider anon, he more particularly insists on the Words of *Clemens Romanus* and *Ignatius*, which I have mentioned above: *We ought to do all things in order as the Lord has commanded us, and particularly to perform our Offerings and Ministry at the appointed Seasons, &c.* Where it is plain that he would have those Words, of making

our Oblations orderly as the Lord has commanded us, to be taken strictly and literally, as though Christ had instituted and ordained that Practice to be observed. If indeed we take the Words strictly, then they would prove that Christ had commanded such Oblations to be made. But against such a strict literal Construction, I have this Objection ; that if we take the Words so, they will prove more than what Dr. Grabe intended, and more than what the Church ever yet allowed. For *Clement* does not only say, that *our Lord commanded Offerings to be made*, but also, that he commanded them to be made *at certain appointed Seasons, at fixed Times and Hours*. Now would Dr. Grabe, if yet Alive, contend, that Christ has by Divine Institution or Command fixed the *Times* and *Hours* when the Sacrament is to be Administred ? I know he would not. And yet this is the main Thing that *Clement* pleads for against those Seditious *Corinthians* who did not observe the accustomed Hours of the Church. How then are we to understand him, when he says, that *our Lord has commanded these things to be done at stated Hours and Times* ? Why, we are taught by St. Paul that *all Things should be done decently and in order* ; and to this end the Church had its stated Times of Divine Worship ; and as every Thing that is commanded in the New Testament is ascribed to our Lord whose Gospel it is ; Christ is, in this larger Sense, said to have commanded that the Set Hours should be observed ; in that otherwise his Law of Decency and Order could not be kept.

If Christ thus only commanded the *Times* to be observed, we may easily perceive how he commanded the *Oblation* also. We are commanded in Scripture to be charitable, and to look on our good Works of that kind as *Sacrifices acceptable to God*. And what the New Testament enjoins is always looked

looked on as Christ's Law; and thus the Making our Offerings to God may be said to be, although the making them at the time of the Holy Sacrament be in no Sense Christ's Law, nor any Part of his Institution, but only a Laudable and Commendable Usage of the Church. I would desire those Gentlemen to think well of this, who pretend that we give up the Cause of the Propitiatory Oblation and Proper Sacrifice of the Eucharist, when we allow in Fact that the Bread and Wine were part of the Oblations that had been offered unto God. I think it must first be proved, that that Practice was ordained and appointed by Jesus Christ, without whose Institution there can be no Proper Sacrifice. And I hope they will at the same time remember, that Bishop *Beveridge* is so far from founding that Practice of their Oblations on the Command of Christ, as a Branch of the Sacrament, that he rather refers it to some such Injunction or Constitution as that of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 16. 2. Of laying by in Store, on the first day of the Week something for the Relief of the Distressed. And if such as this was the beginning of that commendable Practice, it can make nothing for the Proper Sacrifice of the Eucharist Oblations by virtue of these.

§. The last Observation I have to make is, that when *Clement* expresses the Office of the Christian Minister, by offering of Gifts or Oblations, it is neither necessary nor certain that he had any peculiar respect to the Sacramental Elements, in that there were other Gifts and Oblations to be offered besides. It is true that these might also be included; but what I chiefly intend under this Remark is, that those Instances which Dr. *Hickes* has produced from the Ancients, of expressing their Ministrations by the Words *προσέρομεν*, & *offerimus*, and the like, when put without any Substantive joyned

with them, can be of little or no Weight to prove the Proper Sacrifice of the Eucharist, even although they refer to the Celebration of the Sacrament : And that, Because as it is very usual to express any Thing by its Adjuncts, as the *Rhetoricians* call them ; and *Ignatius* in the Passages that I am now accounting for, does undeniably express that Holy Sacrament, by *making the Love-Feast*, which was only Concomitant with it, and no Essential Part of it ; so the Antients may by the same Reason and Manner of Speech, speak of the Eucharist by the Expression of *offering or making Oblations*, which was then constantly done at the same time, without ever intending the Offering of the Bread and Wine, by Divine Institution an essential Part of that Service. And consequently, before either *Clemens Romanus* or *Ignatius* can by these Passages be brought as Witnesses of the Proper Sacrifices of the Eucharist, it must be *firmly proved* by some better Arguments than have yet been produced, that the *δῶρα & προσφοραί*, here mentioned, do refer to the Sacramental Elements rather than to the other Offerings ; and that the pretended Oblation of those Elements is by Divine Institution a necessary Part of that Holy Ordinance. Till these Things are proved by Good and Solid Arguments, to call the Christian Priests or Ministers *Offerers of Gifts and Oblations*, signifies nothing, in that it may refer either to *offering of Prayer*, or any other *Oblations* that were then in use. How far these Elements were offered unto God in the Consecration of them will be considered hereafter.

The next Passage of the Antients to be mentioned in order, is that of *Ignatius ad Smyrn.* §. 7. where speaking of those Hereticks, who did not own Christ to have a Real Body of Flesh and Blood, but only an imaginary Representation of one,

one, he says of them, that *they abstain from the Eucharist, and προσδχαις the Publick Prayers, because they confess not the Eucharist to be the Flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ.* Now though we suppose here, that προσδχαι does not signifie *Prayers* at large, but that particular Office, in which was the Consecration of the Sacrament, and also that *Theodore* renders it by προσφεραν Offering ; all this together amounts to no more, than that the Antients spake of the Eucharist by the Word *Offerings* : which they might as well do with regard to the *Oblations* that attended it, as the same Father in the very next Section calls it the *Love-Feast* on the very same Account. This therefore makes nothing as to the Proper Oblation of the Elements.

There are Four Passages more out of Four Epistles of the same Apostolical Father insisted on, though all to as little Purpose. The First is out of his Epistle to the *Ephesians*, §. 5. Μηδεις πλανησθω. Let no Man deceive himself ; if a Man be not within the Altar he is deprived of the Bread of God. From whence says Dr. *Hickes*, (*Christian Preisthood*, P. 77.) It is plain, that by the Altar he meant the Lord's Table, upon which the Bread was offered. I doubt, this is not near so plain as he may imagine. The first Plain and Obvious Thing in these Words is that they are Figurative Expressions ; that to be within the Altar most plainly signifies to be within the Communion of the Church. And then to be deprived of the Bread of God, by being out of the Communion, must mean being deprived of the Benefits of Christ's Body crucified and represented by that Bread. And this is most plainly the Meaning of that Father, that out of the Communion of Christ's Church, there is, ordinarily speaking, no Participation of the Benefits of his Death. And how little is this to Dr. *Hicks's* Purpose ?

The next Passage is out of his Epistle to the *Magnesians*, §. 7. and runs thus: *Come ye all together as unto one Temple of God, as to one Altar, as unto one Jesus Christ, who proceeded from the Father.* Dr. *Hicks's* Descant is, *Here, as Naos, Temple, is taken Literally; so domasheion, Altar, is to be understood.* This does by no means follow; we have seen a like Passage above, where *Tertullian* speaks of a Gift in the Temple, but is so far from intending a Material Gift; because he speaks of a Material Temple, that he expressly declares he speaks of Prayer; And why then may not *Ignatius* intend so too by the Altar? The two next Places are to the *Trallians*, §. 7. *Continue inseparable from Jesus Christ our God, and from your Bishop, and from the Commands of the Apostles: For he that is within the Altar is pure, but he who is without it, that is, he who does any thing without the Bishop, and Presbyters and Deacons, is not pure in his Conscience.* And again, to the *Philadelphians*, §. 4. *Wherefore let it be your Endeavour to partake all of the same Eucharist. For there is but one Flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one Cup for the Unity of his Blood; one Altar, as there is also one Bishop; together with his Presbytery and the Deacons my Fellow-Servants.* But as in all this there is nothing but the Word Altar used again for the Communion of the Church, without any Appearance of a Literal Meaning, it wants no farther Answer.

There is, I think then, hitherto no Proof of the Material Sacrifice of the Sacramental Elements; Nothing but wresting some Expressions that are undeniably Figurative and spoken by Allusion only.

The next Father to be considered in Order, is *Justin Martyr*; who in his Second Apology gives this Account of that Holy Supper.

After

After the Common Prayer and the Kifs of Salutation, Bread and Wine mixed with Water are brought unto the chief Minister ; who taking them, offers up Praise and Glory to God the Father of all things, in the Name of Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost ; and gives Thanks for a good while, that God has thought fit to make us Partakers of these things. Which ended, all the People with joyful Acclamation say Amen. (p. 97. Ed. Par.) What the manner of their Thanksgiving was, he tells us in another Place, That we may give Thanks to God, that he hath created the World with all things therein for the Use of Man, and that he has delivered us from all the Evil in which we before were ; and hath utterly destroyed the Principalities and Powers of the wicked one, by him who was made to suffer, according to the Determinate Counsel and Will of God. (Dial. cum Trypho. p. 260.) But to return : After this Unanimous Acclamation to the Bishop, or chief Minister's Thanksgiving, those whom we call the Deacons distribute to all present a Part of this Blessed Bread and Wine with Water, and carry it to them that are absent. And this Food is with us call'd the Eucharist, (Apol. 2. p. 98.) which none are to partake of, but those only who believe the Doctrines to be true that are taught among us, who are washed in the Laver of Regeneration for the Forgiveness of Sins, and that live as Christ hath commanded us to live. For we receive not this as common Bread and Wine : But as Jesus Christ our Saviour being Incarnate by the Word of God, took on him both Flesh and Blood for our Salvation ; So we are taught, that the Food blessed by the Prayer of the Word which came from him, and with which our Flesh and Blood are by a Change of them nourished, is the Flesh and Blood of that Incarnate Jesus. For the Apostles in the Histories written by them, which we call the Gospels, relate that Jesus thus commanded them ; taking Bread, and giving Thanks, and saying, Do this in Remembrance of me, this is my Body. And

also having taken the Cup and given Thanks, he said, *This is my Blood. Which the evil Dæmons have in Imitation taught to be done in the Mysteries of Mithra: Where, in the Sacred Rites of Initiation, Bread and a Cup with Water are used with a set Form of Words, as you either do or may know. We always, after this done, put one another in mind of those things: And they who abound help all that need, and we always converse together. And in all our Offerings we praise the Maker of all things by his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost.*—Again, to the same purpose; Prayers being ended, as I said above, Bread and Wine are brought, the chief Minister or Bishop sends up both Prayers and Thanksgivings with all his Might, and the People cheerfully join with him, saying Amen. And then a Distribution is made of what has thus been blessed to all present, and some is sent to the absent by the Deacons. They that are wealthy and willing, give every one as he sees fit; and this being put together, is deposited with the Bishop, who from thence supplies the Orphans and Widows, and the Sick, and them that are in want by any other means; and Prisoners, and Sojourners, and Strangers, and all that are in Distress. This is, I think, the most particular Account of the Manner of administering the Holy Sacrament that we meet with in all the Fathers. In which *Justin* speaks (p. 118.) of the great Devotion of the Christians, in their Prayers and Praises, and Offerings, for Pious and Charitable Uses; of which Offerings the Sacramental Bread and Wine were a Part: But he says nothing at all of sacrificing those Elements in the Consecration or Use of them: And yet *Dr. Hickes* finds here a Two-fold Oblation of them, where an Indifferent Reader would have found none. It is said indeed, ἀρτος προσέφερεται, Bread is brought, τῷ πρεσβυτέρῳ, to the President or Bishop, and he took it, and Consecrated it with large Prayers and Thanksgivings to God through Jesus Christ for all

his

his Mercies and Blessings. But here is not one Word of any new Oblation and Sacrifice in that Consecration.

If it be said, that it must be understood and included, in making *the Bread and Wine the Symbols of Christ's Body and Blood, to represent the Oblation that he made of both upon the Cross* ; this, as I observ'd before, is in effect to say, that Christ cannot InSTITUTE a Sacrament without a Sacrifice : For if he can, there is then no Necessity of understanding an Oblation of the Elements, where there is no Mention made of it. It is expressly said, that he offered up Prayers and Thanksgivings ; but I hope that might be without Offering up Bread and Wine, even altho' it was in the Consecration of them. But, says Dr. H. (p.100.) *It was so understood by those who Officiated in the wicked Mysteries of Mithra, and who introduc'd this Oblation of Bread and a Cup, in Imitation of the Christians, as Justin tells us.* We are come to a fine Pass, when the Doctrines of the Christian Sacraments, must be learnt from the Sentiments that the Heathens had of them. 'Tis Time sure to proceed, and look out for better Authorities.

The Two next Places that I shall mention out of *Justin*, are somewhat more plausible. They are in his Discourse with *Trypho the Jew* (P. 259, 260.) ; where he mentions the Oblation of *Fine Flower* (under the Law) for *Lepers cleansed, as a Type of the Eucharistical Bread* ; which, says he, our Lord *Jesus Christ commanded us, ποιειν*, to make, or Offer in Remembrance of the *Passion which he suffer'd.* And in another Place (P. 296, 297.) alluding to *Isa. xxij. 16.* he says, *This Prophet treats of the Bread which our Lord Christ taught us, ποιειν*, to make, or Offer in Commemoration of his being Body for those that Believe in him ; for whose Sakes he was made capable

pable of Suffering ; and of the Cup, which he taught us
~~to~~ to make, or Offer in Remembrance of his
 Blood. There are some Expressions in other Fa-
 thers so agreeable to these, that I hope it will be
 no Fault to mention them now, altho' it be out
 of the Order that I propos'd to observe ; in that
 the same Answer will be sufficient for them all.
 St. Cyprian, in his 63^d. Ep. expresses himself thus ;
In Calice offerendo, In Offering the Cup. Ut Calix qui
in Commemoratione ejus offertur, mixtus vino offeratur.
 And again afterwards ; *Apparet Sanguinem Christi*
non offerri, si desit vinum calici ; nec Sacrificium Do-
mini cum legitimâ Sanctificatione celebrari, nisi Oblatio
& Sacrificium nostrum responderit Passioni. That the
 Cup which is Offered in his Remembrance, or Com-
 memoration, may be Offer'd mixed with Wine. It
 is plain, we do not Offer the Blood of Christ, if there
 be no Wine in it ; nor is our Lord's Sacrifice celebrated
 with a Lawful Sanctification, unless our Oblation and
 Sacrifice answers to his Passion ; With several other
 such like Expressions in the same Epistle. Of
 like Nature is that out of the Prayer of Consec-
 ration, (*Const. Apost. L. VIII. c. 12.*) so often ap-
 peal'd to, and indeed the best Authority in all this
 Cause. *Μεμνησθαι τῆς θύτης, &c.* We therefore Remem-
 bring his Passion and Death, and his Resurrection from
 the Dead, his Return into Heaven, and the Second Ap-
 pearance, in which he will come with Power and Glory
 to Judge both Quick and Dead, and to Render to every
 one according to his Works ; We Offer to thee our King
 and God, according to his Command, this Bread and the
 Cup ; giving Thanks to thee by him, that thou hast thought
 us worthy to stand before thee, and to minister unto thee.
 And we beseech thee, that thou wouldst be pleas'd to look
 favourably on these Gifts now laying before thee ; Thou
 who art God, that wantest nothing ; that thou may'st be
 pleas'd in them, to the Honour of thy Christ : And that
 thou

thou wouldst send thy Holy Spirit upon this Sacrifice, the Witness of the Sufferings of our Lord Jesus; that it may make (ἀνομίην) this Bread the Body of thy Christ, and this Cup the Blood of thy Christ, that we being Partakers of it, may be strengthen'd unto Godliness, and obtain Remission of our Sins, &c. There are also some other such like Expressions, cited from other Ancient Liturgies. And in truth, in such Citations as these, lays the main Strength of this Cause, as to the Sense and Judgment of the Ancients. To all which I answer;

1. That if these Expressions, *Offer, Sacrifice*, and the like, were to be taken *literally* and *properly*, they would undeniably determine against us, as to the Sense and Usage of the Church in those Ages; and would leave us no other Defence than this; How far we should then think our selves obliged to follow either their Sentiments or Usages, when they have nothing in the Holy Scripture to support them. And there are some Notions and Practices of this kind to be mention'd, in which all Protestants do grant, that the Ancients are not to be imitated. But I need not have Recourse to this: For,

2. I am fully persuaded, that Dr. *Hickes* cannot chuse out any One single Instance, of all his Numerous Quotations from the Ancients, that is to be taken according to the strict Literal Meaning of the Words; but that when they so speak, they intended to be understood figuratively only. We have seen already; that the Apostles and Fathers did with a great deal of Freedom use the Sacrificial Language and Expressions, when they spake only of the Spiritual Sacrifice of Christians; and found it very serviceable to them so to do. It not only obviated the Objection of Enemies, who call'd them Atheists, and said they had no Religion, be-

because they had no Sacrifices ; but it was also instructive to their Converts , as it taught them to Believe and Expect that Communion and Favour with God in their Christian Duties , which they had before look'd for in their old Sacrifices and Feasts. Hence it was, as has been shewn, that they call'd Prayers *Sacrifices*, and Alms *Oblations* ; and to Perform the Christian Service, is express'd by *Offering of Gifts*, and *Consecrating the Love-Feasts* ; and to Receive the Christian Communion, is to *Eat of the Altar* , to *Partake of the Altar*, and to *be within the Altar*. Thus also the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is called the *Oblation*, the *Sacrifice* ; and the Sacramental Elements are sometimes call'd the *Offerings*, and the *Gifts*. To Perform this Service, is to *Offer* ; and to Consecrate the Bread and Wine, is express'd by *Offering them* : And the Sacramental Elements so consecrated, are said to be made *the Body and Blood of Christ* ; and the Holy Ghost is call'd down upon them by Prayer, not to make any Real Change in their Substance, but only to exhibit by them the Effects of Christ's Passion upon Men's Souls, in Strengthening them to Godliness : And in all this, their Words are no more to be taken literally, than St. Paul's is, when he speaks of the *Circumcision of the Heart* , and of the *Spirit*.

There needs then, I think, no other Answer to be given to any Arguments drawn from such Expressions, than to desire those who appeal to them, to observe and consider seriously, how they have been used by the Ancients. I have shew'd above, that the Verb *προσφέρειν*, which in the Jewish Service signifies to Offer *Oblations* or *Sacrifices*, in the Christian signifies to *Pray for* ; and is applied both to *Persons* and *Things*. If it signifies to *Pray*, then why not also to *Consecrate* ? The Reverend and

Learn-

Learned Dr. Potter, whose Sentiments have been appeal'd to in this Controversy, says, (*Church-Government*, p. 273.) *In the Fathers of the next Age (after Irenæus) to Consecrate the Lord's-Supper, is so constantly call'd προσφέρειν in Greek, and offerre in Latin, to Offer; that it is needless to cite any Testimonies from them. And thus προσφέρωμι σοι τὸν ἄρτον τῆς τῶν will be render'd, we Consecrate unto thee this Bread.*

The Verb *Offero* signifies to *Pray*: *Oblationes pro Defunctis*, are *Prayers for the Dead*. So are also *Oblationes & Sacrificia ad Commemorationes eorum*, Cyprian, Ep. 12. *Non offertur pro eo*, is, *No Prayer is to be made for him*, Ep. 1. 'Tis apply'd to the very Name of the Persons thus commemorated, or pray'd for: *Offertur nomen eorum*, Ep. 16. That it signifies also to *Consecrate* the Bread and Wine, is plain, by the same Author's using the Verbs *Offero* and *Sanctifico* promiscuously, to denote the same Thing in the same Epistle, and in the same Page. In one Line it's express'd, *in Calice Sanctificando*; and in another of the same Page, *in Calice Offerendo*, Ep. 63. Which plainly shews, that he intends no more by *Offering*, than the *Sanctifying* or *Consecrating* it. In the same Epistle he applies it to the Blood of Christ, and calls it the *Lord's Sacrifice*, when it is celebrated *legitimâ Sanctificatione*, by a *Regular Consecration*. All which Expressions are no more to be taken strictly and literally, than when it is said, that the *Bread and Wine* are the *Body and Blood* of Christ. There is, as far as I can yet discern, as much Reason to take one in a literal Sense, as the other; and consequently, no better Proof of this, as far as the Authority of the Fathers goes, than there is of *Transubstantiation*. Both depend on the Expressions

pressions being taken in a Literal, or a Figurative Sense. But

3. That which confirms me in taking all this Language of the Fathers figuratively only, is, That when it was objected against the Christians, that they had no Sacrifices; instead of insisting on this pretended *Material Sacrifice of Bread and Wine*, so much talk'd on now, they rather declined such an Answer, and referr'd themselves wholly to the *Sacrifice of Prayer and Thanksgivings, and Alms, and other good Works*, (*Vid. Just. Mart. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 226.*) (*Athenag. Apol. p. 13.*) While they spake to Believers who understood their Language, and by their Knowledge of the Doctrines of the Church, were instructed how the Phrases of Analogy and Allusion were to be taken, they used such Expressions freely. But when they came to answer an *Objection* and Charge brought against them, it was time then to lay by their Tropes and Figures, and to speak the Truth in plain Language. Let me then recommend it to the serious Thoughts of the zealous Defenders of this pretended Propitiatory Sacrifice, whether it would not have been most to the Purpose of any thing that could be replied to that Charge, if the Fathers could have thought themselves at Liberty with a good Conscience to have said as some now do: That *Christians have a Real, Proper, Material, Propitiatory Sacrifice of Bread and Wine that deserves as much to be called a Sacrifice as any of the Typical ones offered among the Jews* (*Bishop Ox. Ch. Conf. p. 13, 14.*) And yet instead of pleading this, they answered thus, *We are not any longer cleansed by the Blood of Goats, or Sheep, or by the Ashes of a Calf, ἢ σπυδαίαιος σπυροπέγης, or with Oblations of fine Flower, but by Faith in Jesus Christ* (*Just. cum Tryph. p. 229.*) The Jews were not cleansed by any intrinsic Merit in these, but only

used them as typical Oblations, as some would now do Bread and Wine for Representative Sacrifices to take away Sins. But the Primitive Christians pretended to none such. Again, when *Trypho* the Jew was pressed by *Justin* with *Malachi's* Prophecy, which foretold the Abolition of Sacrifices, and the Appointment of new and spiritual ones in their stead: *Trypho* would have that to be spoken only of God's not accepting the Sacrifices that were offered in Jerusalem during the Captivity, and of his being more pleased with the Prayers of those Captives, who were dispersed among the Gentiles; and therefore called them Sacrifices, (p. 344, 345, 346.) To whom *Justin* replied, "Ὁ μὲν ἐν τῇ εὐχαρί τῇ εὐχαρίστῳ, &c. I also say that Prayers and Thanksgivings offered of those that are worthy, are the only Perfect and Pleasing Sacrifices to God. And Christians are taught to offer only these, even in the Remembrance of their Food both dry and wet, in which a Memorial is made of the Passion, which by the Appointment of God the Father, God the Son suffered, whose Name the Chief Priests and Rulers caused to be prophaned and blasphemed thro' the World. Here is as plain and evident an Allusion to the Holy Sacrament, as in any of the Authorities produced from all the Fathers by *Dr. Hickes*; and the Prophecy of *Malachi*, and his pure Sacrifice applied to it. And as *Justin* affirms, Prayers and Thanksgivings to be the only Perfect and Pleasing Sacrifices to God; so when he declares, that Christians are taught to offer these only even in that Memorial of Christ's Passion; it is methinks undeniable that the Fathers of the Primitive Church know nothing of any Material Sacrifice, and which is as properly to be called a Sacrifice, as any of those that were offered among the Jews. They who knew and practis'd such a Material Sacrifice of Bread and Wine, could no more affirm Prayers and Thanksgivings to be the only Sacrifices of Christians, than they

they could say that the *Jews* knew *Prayers and Thanksgivings* to be the only *Perfect and Pleasing Sacrifice* to God, which all the World knows is false. And I am very sure that some of those who in our days contend for the *Proper Sacrifice* of Bread and Wine, speak of Prayer in a quite different manner; And are so far from allowing it to be the only *Sacrifice* of *Christians*, and the only *pleasing Sacrifice* to God, as *Justin* calls it; that one (*Scandret's Sacrif. p. 106, 145, 149.*) expressly affirms it to be the *least Part* of the *Priest's Office*, and of so small Moment, that without this Sacrament of Bread and Wine, Christ is not allow'd to have appointed any *Divine Worship* in his Church, nor *Christians* to have any *Means of Communion with him*. I do from my Heart believe the Sentiments of the Ancients to have been as different from that of these Men, as their Expressions are; and that when they declare, that *even in the Memorial of Christ's Passion, Prayers and Praises* are the only *Sacrifices* of *Christians*, and the only *Perfect and Pleasing Sacrifices* to God; they were as far from thinking of any *Proper Sacrifice* of Bread and Wine, as these Men who contend for such a Sacrifice are from allowing Prayer to be a sufficient Means of Communion with God.

Such Expressions and Declarations as these then, even when the Fathers speak of the Sacrament, are enough to convince an *Unprejudic'd Reader*, that whatever Liberty they took in the Use of Sacrificial Terms and Expressions, they did it all only in the way of Analogy and Allusion, but are not to be taken Literally, because they owned no other Sacrifice than those Spiritual Ones of Prayer and Thanksgivings. Dr. *Hickes*, to obviate such Authorities, says, (*Christ. Priesth. p. 30.*) that such Expressions ought not to be taken *Exclusively*, but only *Comparatively*; as when St. Paul says, I determined

not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him Crucified: he meant not to exclude Christ's Resurrection and Ascension. (Account of 3d Edit. p. xxix, xxx:) But if it is plain and undeniable, that it would have been the most apposite Answer which the Fathers could possibly have made to the Objection brought against them, if they could truly have said that they also had as *Proper Material Sacrifices* as any of those among the *Jews*; and that the Pure Sacrifice of *Malachi* was such: And yet when instead of such a Plea, and waving such a Pertinent Answer, as they certainly never would have waved, if they could justly have insisted on it; they do expressly declare, that *Prayers and Praises are the only Pleasing Sacrifices to God*, and the *only Sacrifices that Christians are taught to offer*; and thus interpret the Prophecy of *Malachy*: It is most certain that such Expressions must be taken Exclusively. And that we make the Ancients to argue very sillily in their own Cause, to mention and insist on Spiritual Sacrifices only, when they might as well have affirmed that they had Proper and Material Ones. *Athenagoras* answers the same Objection, of no Sacrifices among Christians, the very same way. (*Apol.* p. 13.) God accounts this the *Greatest Sacrifice*, that we acknowledge who it is that hath stretched out the Heavens, and wrought them together as into a Globe, that has fastened the Earth as the Center, and gathered the Waters into the Sea; that hath separated the Light from the Darkness, and adorned the Sky with Stars; who brought all kind of Fruit out of the Earth, who formed all living Creatures, and made Man. When we think of these Things, and lift up Holy Hands unto him, what other Sacrifices does he want? ---- What have we to do with Sacrifice which God wants not? We must offer the unbloody Sacrifice, and bring the Reasonable Service, viz. The Worship and Praise mentioned above: He takes no Notice of

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any other ; which on this Occasion he could not easily have omitted, if he had known of any *Proper Material Sacrifice* among Christians.

But to return to other Authorities of the Ancients : The next in Course is *Irenæus*. He, *Lib. IV. Cap. 20.* says, that *the Apostles* as Priests had neither *Lands nor Houses of Inheritance*, *sed semper altari & Deo serviunt*, but alway attend at God's Altar. *Fenar-dentius* a Popish Editor of *Irenæus*, to defend the Sacrifice of the Mass, here remarks, That the *Christians from the Time of Christ and his Apostles downward, kept Altars in their Churches.* This Remark is mentioned by *Dr. Grabe*, p. 69. and produced by *Dr. Hickes* in Favour of his new Sacrifice. When he can prove that *Altari Serviunt* is to be taken literally and not figuratively, the Remark may be allowed good. Till then it deserves no farther Notice.

The other Place of *Irenæus*, and which is more tenaciously insisted on in this Cause, is that of *Lib. IV. Cap. 32, 33, 34.* where writing against the Hereticks who denied God the Creator of the World to be the Father of Jesus Christ, he confutes them by shewing that the Christian Service was all intended to the Honour of God the Father, the Creator of all Things. And in the *32d cap.* he shews the Consistency of this, with the Christians leaving off the Old Testament Sacrifices and Oblations : By shewing from several Texts of the Old Testament, that God the Creator had no want of nor Pleasure or Delight in them, but preferred Mercy and good Works, and Oblations of Piety and Charity before them. And then to shew that Christians still offer such, he adds, *And also counselling his Disciples to offer unto God the First-Fruits of his Creatures, not as to one that wants them, but that they may be neither Unprofitable nor Ungrateful, he took the Bread which is God's Creature, and giving Thanks said, This is*
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my Body ; and likewise the Cup , which with us is also reckoned to be his Creature, and confessed it to be his Blood, and taught this to be the new Oblation of the New Testament, which the Church receiving from the Apostles, offers through the whole World to God, who gives us for Food the First-Fruits of his Creatures under the New Testament. And then he applies to it the Prophecy of Malachi, I. 10, 11. I have no Pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, neither will I accept an Offering at your Hand. For from the rising of the Sun to the going down of the same, my Name shall be great among the Gentiles ; and in every Place Incense shall be offered unto my Name , and a pure Offering. From these Words Dr. Grabe, as he attempted before from the Words of Clemens Rom. would inculcate the Proper Sacrifice of the Eucharist to have been by Divine Appointment, from Christ to his Apostles, and from them by Tradition to the Church. So would Dr. Hickes, who mentions also St. Cyprian's Epistle to Cæcilius, Epist. 63, and says, That the Ancients believed that our Lord made an Oblation of the Bread and Wine at his Institution of this Sacrament, and commanded his Disciples so to do, is past all doubt. And then he appeals to these Testimonies. It is much easier to take this for granted than to prove it. For, as we have seen above, that if Clemens Romanus's Words were to be taken strictly , they would prove more than the Christian World now believes to be true, and do more expressly assert that Christ appointed the Seasons and Hours when this Sacrament is to be administered, than they do the Sacrifice of the Bread and Wine : So I must say of Cyprian's, without repeating any more of them than what I have repeated above ; That if he be allow'd to argue there justly and truly in the strictest Sense of his Words, we must then upon such Authorities own that Water is as Essential to this Sacrament as Bread and Wine.

For that is the main Thing that he there insists on, and the pretended Oblation is only mentioned occasionally in the Way and Manner of his expressing himself. *Ut calix qui in commemoratione ejus offertur, mixtus vino offeratur.* That the Cup offered in Commemoration of him, be offered mixed with Wine; i. e. With Wine and Water together. So again, *Dominus panem & calicem mixtum vino obtulit.* He writes indeed against those who used no Wine but Water only, but then to convince them of the Evil of this Practice, he says, Christ our Lord offered Bread and a Cup mixed with Wine. Now if *Clemens* is not to be taken strictly when he says, that Christ appointed the *Times* and *Hours* of celebrating this Supper; if *Cyprian* is not to be allowed in a strict Sense to affirm *Wine and Water* to be appointed in Christ's Original Institution, or at least not to argue justly and truly if he says so: Why then must they be so taken in what they do not so directly and expressly affirm? Why must their looser Expressions be thought such convincing Proofs of a Proper Sacrifice? Or, why must *Irenæus* his Words necessarily have a stricter Construction put upon them, than those of *Clemens* and *Cyprian* will admit? In short, when he says that Christ counselling his Disciples to offer the First-Fruits of his Creatures to God, took Bread, &c. I can see no more Reason why he should be understood strictly and literally, than *Clemens* must be so when he says that Christ ordained the Offerings to be made at the appointed *Times* and *Seasons*. But, as was said before, what the Gospel in any Part of it directs, is ascribed to Christ whose Gospel it is; and what by the Custom of the Church was practised at and with this Sacrament, was in a larger and looser Sense spoken of as a Part of it. Christ has enjoined our charitable Contributions, both by Example and Precept; and these are called

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Offerings and Sacrifices, &c. And these in *Irenæus's* time were given just before the Celebration of the Sacrament. And this it was that caused him to express himself in such a manner, as though Christ in the Original Institution had appointed such Oblations to be then made and in that Manner. Which he no more did than he in the same Institution appointed Wine and Water to be mixed, as *Cyprian* intimates; or than he by and in that Institution settled the *Times and Seasons* for celebrating that Sacrament, as the Words of *Clemens* would seem to import. Having then thus shewed how that Expression of *Irenæus* is to be understood; I would make some farther Observations on these three Chapters of that Father. As,

1. That his calling the Bread and Wine *God's Creatures* in so emphatical a Manner, was with a particular Regard to the Hereticks, who, as has been said, denied God the Creator to be the Father of Christ, and to be worshipped by Christians. This is plain from those Words, *Cap. 34. Quomodo autem constabit, &c.* How will it appear to them that the Bread in which he gives Thanks is the Body of Christ, or the Cup his Blood; if they say he is not the Son of the Creator of the World; i. e. the Word by which the Tree brings forth Fruit. This is what the Expression *ex sua Creatura* tends to.

2. When he affirms this Holy Sacrament to be the new Oblation of the New Testament, he grounds that Notion on the Prophecy of *Malachi*, and applies that Prophecy to it.

3. When he explains what is offered in this new Oblation, according to the Words of the Prophet; by the Incense there mentioned he understands Prayer. This he expressly declares, *Cap. 33. Incensa autem Joannes in Apocalypsi, orationes esse ait sanctorum.*

St. John in the Revelations says, that the Prayers of the Saints are the Incense.

4. As to the Oblations which *Irenæus* here refers to, it is as evident as the Light of the Sun at Noon, that he means those general Oblations of the *First-Fruits of our Substance* to be employ'd in Pious and Charitable Uses, which we have already seen above, were made at the same time that the Holy Sacrament was administred : But were not by Divine Institution any Part of it. He applies to this these Words of our Saviour, of *bringing our Gift to the Altar* ; and he joins to it, and to the Support of it, that other Precept of the Law of *Moses*, *Thou shalt not appear empty before the Lord thy God.*

And though he there largely sets forth the different Oblations of the Old and New Testament, theirs being those of *Servants*, and ours of *Children* : Yet he places the Difference chiefly in the Christians being more generous and bountiful in good Works. *Et non genus Oblationum reprobatur est, &c.* Oblations in general are not rejected, for Oblations were there, and Oblations are here ; there were Sacrifices among the People, and Sacrifices in the Church ; but the Kind of them is changed, in that they are not now offered by *Servants*, but by *Children*. For it is one and the same Lord, but there is one proper Character of the servile Oblation, and another in that of *Children* ; so that in the Oblations there is an evident Token of Liberty. For there is nothing under *Moses* insignificant, and without a Sign. And therefore they dedicated or offered the Tenth of their Substance ; but they who have received Liberty devote all that they have to the Uses of our Lord ; giving chearfully and freely, not little Things, but as becomes those who hope for great Felicity : The poor Widow giving all her Substance into the Treasury of God. These are the Oblations of Christians that *Irenæus* speaks of, and plainly intends as the New Oblations of the New Testament.

statement. And what else could he intend when he says afterwards; *Quoniam igitur cum simplicitate Ecclesia offert, &c.* As then the Church offers with Simplicity, its Gift is justly reckoned with God a pure Sacrifice; as Paul says to the Philippians, iv. 18. I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the Things that were sent you, as an Odour of a sweet Smell, a Sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. What are these Oblations? And why were these Expressions suppress'd, and not mentioned by Dr. Hickes, when he pretends to Account for Irenæus's new Oblation of the New Testament, as described in the Prophecy of Malachi? And yet he has still more to the same Purpose. For as God wants not those Things that come from us, so we do want to make an Offering unto God; as Solomon says, He that hath Pity on the Poor lendeth to the Lord. For he who wants nothing may take our good Works to himself, that he may give us a Recompence of his own good Things. As our Lord said, Come ye Blessed of my Father, I was hungry and ye gave me Meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me Drink, &c. As therefore the Word or Logos not wanting these Things, but for our Sakes will have these to be done, that we may not be unprofitable, he gave Commandment to the People to make their Offerings, that they might learn to serve God: So he will that we also should frequently and without Intermission bring our Gift to the Altar. For our Altar is in Heaven, whither our Prayers and Oblations are directed: Is this a Material Altar? Or are Prayers Material Sacrifices; And what are the Oblations here spoken of and plainly intended: But only our Gifts for Pious and Charitable Uses? How little then will all this boasted Authority make for the Oblation of the Sacramental Elements, if taken altogether? So far from it that the Oblations of Charity were made by the People, rather than by the Priests. He gave Commandment to the People to make their Offerings, &c.

Thus far then I think it is very plain, that we have no Proof or Evidence from the Testimonies of the Ancients, of the Sacramental Bread and Wine being any otherwise offered as an Oblation to God, than as they were a Part taken out of the general Oblations which the Christians offered, but not a Part of the Sacrament by Divine Institution, only by the mere Usage or occasional Sanctions of the Church.

If we descend now to more Authorities out of *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Origen*, &c. we only find the same Things said over again, and the same sacrificial Expressions applied figuratively and by way of Allusion only to the Spiritual Sacrifices of Christians, and in particular to the Holy Sacrament. So that I think I need not trouble the Reader with more Quotations, in that the same Answer must be made to them which has been made to those already mentioned.

But whereas a great Noise is made about *Malachi's New Offering of the Gentiles*; and this has so often been said to be the Sacramental Elements of the Eucharist, give me leave to observe that *Tertullian* is so far from favouring any such Sentiments, that he expressly declares that pure Sacrifice of the *Gentiles* to be *simplex Oratio de Conscientiâ purâ*, *Adv. Marcion. L. iv. c. 1. Sincere Prayer out of a pure Conscience*. And in the following Words at large refers it to the Spiritual Sacrifices, as *Iustin Martyr* and *Irenæus* had done before him. Nay, he in three several Places refers *Malachi's* pure Offering of the *Gentiles* to the Spiritual Sacrifice of Prayers and Praises, *Adv. Jud. cap. V. adv. Marcion. L. III. cap. 22. IV. 1.* Methinks this was not an agreeable Construction, if he had known the Bread and Wine in the Eucharist to have been by the Church at that time look'd on as the *Proper Sacrifice of Christians*, spoken of by

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that Prophet. And therefore *Tertullian* who gives this, certainly knew of no other Christian Sacrifice.

I cannot but think these Authorities sufficient to shew any indifferent Reader what the Sense and Judgment of the Ancients were as to this Matter : Especially if we bring all our Observations from the Places cited together , and see what they will amount to.

1. It is plain , that as the Apostles were to convince the Christians of the abolishing of all the Legal Typical Sacrifices ; so they were to shew them a more effectual Way to the Favour and Grace of God , by the Spiritual Worship and Service of the Gospel.

2. That it was of great Use to this Purpose, and a Means to wean them from their former Prejudices and mistaken Expectations, to apply the *Sacrificial* Language of *Gifts* , *Altar* , *Sacrifices* , and *Offerings* , to this Spiritual Service ; as some of the Prophetic Writers had done before them, *Pf. 50.14. Hos. 14. 2. Act. 24. 17. Heb. 13. 15, 16.*

3. When the Christians were hereupon charg'd with a Violation of the Laws of God in the Old Testament for not offering Sacrifices as there prescribed, they insisted on the Abolition of those Sacrifices, and of the Institution of a New One in their stead, to have been decreed by Almighty God under the Messiah, and to have been foretold by the Prophet *Malachi* in the Words so often refer'd to.

4. They often refer that Sacrifice spoken of by *Malachi* to this Holy Sacrament, and call it the *New Oblation of the New Testament.*

5. When they explain themselves what is *offered* in this New Oblation, or Sacrifice ; some of them speak chiefly of those General Contributions to Pious

Pious and Charitable Uses, which were then made at the same time when this Holy Sacrament was administred. Which *Oblations* were employ'd in the Maintenance of the Ministers, Widows and Orphans, and for the *Love-Feasts* that were then in use.

6. That the making of those *Oblations* at the time of the Holy Sacrament was no part of the Institution, but rather founded on some early Ecclesiastical Ordinance; And that might be begun by the Apostles themselves, as the *Love-Feasts* also were.

7. That the Sacramental Bread and Wine were no otherwise offered unto God before their Consecration, than as they were a Part of those General *Oblations* spoken of before: They were *taken out of those General Oblations*, but there is no Evidence that they themselves were offered to God apart from the rest.

8. That those of the Fathers who do not refer *Malachi's Pure Offering* to the Alms and Pious Gifts of the Christians, refer it chiefly to their Prayers and Praises, as *Irenæus* understands Prayer by the *Incense* there mentioned; and *Tertullian* and Others.

9. That while they looked on these Devotions to be the true Christian Sacrifices, that were ordained by Almighty God to succeed in the Place of those *Earthly Sacrifices*, as *Tertullian* calls them, that were in Use before; they, after the Example of St. Paul, applied to all the Parts of the Christian Service with a great deal of Liberty, the Sacrificial Phrases and Expressions, when they could intend them to be understood Figuratively only. Remarkable to this purpose are the Words of the Apostol. *Const. l. 2. cap. 25.* where speaking of the Difference between the *Jewish Worship* and the *Christian*, he says, *What was formerly a Sacrifice, is now Prayers and Praises,*
and

and Thanksgivings. What was then *Tenths, and First-fruits and Gifts*, are now our *Oblations or Offerings*, which the Holy Bishop offers to our Lord God by *Jesus Christ*.

10. Lastly, That all this was not intended to make the Bread and Wine a Proper *Material Sacrifice* in Consecration, is plain from hence: That when they were charged by their Enemies as having *no Sacrifice*, and were thereby obliged to give the justest, and plainest, and directest Answer to the Objection that they could; They did not then, when it would have been most for their purpose, say that they had a *Proper Material Sacrifice* of Bread and Wine: But instead of that, they generally explain *Malachi's* Prophecy of the *Pure Sacrifice of the Gentiles*, by the *Spiritual Sacrifices of Prayers and Praises, from a Pure Heart*. And when they make such mention of the Bread and Wine, as shew that they had that Sacrament in view; they even then tell us, that *Prayers and Praises are the only Perfect and Pleasing Sacrifices to God, and such only as the Christians are taught to offer in the Commemoration of Christ's Passion*. Which are so plainly Exclusive of any other Sacrifice besides that of Prayers and Praises, that I am amazed what could induce *Dr. Hickes* to bring in this Authority on his Side of the Controversy. And now I hope it may be time for me to shew,

IV. Lastly, That as neither the Institution of this Sacrament, nor any other Texts of Scripture, nor the Authority of the Ancients, when rightly and truly understood, do favour the Doctrine of the Proper Material Sacrifice of the Sacramental Bread and Wine, so the Church of *England* and her Divines do declare against it. The Lord Bishop of *Oxford* recommends it to his Clergy, to consider how far this Doctrine of a Proper Sacrifice is consistent with the *31st Article*, with the Office of *Communion*.

nion, and with the Opinions of our best Divines. I shall enquire into the Sense and Judgment of the Church of England by all these, altho' not exactly in the Order here mentioned.

1. His Lordship had undoubted Reason to believe this Doctrine Inconsistent with the 31st Article: Which plainly declaring, that *there is no other Satisfaction for Sin, but only that one once made by Christ on the Cross*; do's effectually Exclude all other Real Sacrifices of Propitiation whatsoever. If therefore Mr. L. and his Friends contend for any other, whether it be a Self-sufficient one or no, it contradicts the Doctrine of that Article. For altho' that was primarily levelled at the *Romish* Mass, yet as it runs in most General Terms, and expressly says, that *there is no other Satisfaction for Sin*, without any manner of Allowance or Distinction: It must conclude against all manner of Pretences to any Second Satisfaction, whether Self-sufficient or Satisfactory in any other Subordinate Sense whatever. It would be the greatest Injustice to the Universal Expressions of this Article, to limit it by any pretended Distinctions or Evasions.

2. This is I think abundantly confirmed by the Opinions and Declarations of our best Divines. I cannot indeed say that the Article, or our first Reformers, directly denied the Material Sacrifice of the Bread and Wine; it is not possible that they should: They never heard of it, it was not then in being: It had its first Birth between the Years 1630, and 1640, and was never known before. But they do that which is Equivalent to it; they Disclaim all Pretences to any other Sacrifice but that of *Praise and Thanksgiving*, and of *our selves* to God's Service. Archbishop Cranmer's Sentiments have

have been delivered already in another Treatise, and need not here be repeated. But because his Judgment is endeavoured to be evaded, as tho' he only condemned the *Romish* Mass; I desire that these his Words may be well considered. - *In very deed, to speak properly, we make no Sacrifice of Christ, but a Commemoration and Remembrance of that Sacrifice, which he alone made, &c.* And again, having spoken before of Christ's Propitiatory Sacrifice, he adds, *Another kind of Sacrifice there is which doth not Reconcile us unto God, but is made of them that be Reconciled to Christ, to testify our Duties unto God, and to shew our selves thankful to him. And therefore they be called not Proper Material Sacrifices, but, Sacrifices of Laud, Praise and Thanksgiving.* These are all the Sacrifices that Archbishop Crammer allows of, with relation to that Sacrament: And if Mr. L's *Proper Material Sacrifice* comes under neither of these two, it must in effect be Disclaimed by that Archbishop.

Archbishop Parker, and several other Bishops, in the Beginning of Queen Elizabeth's Reign, among several Reasons offered to her Majesty, why the Communion should not then be administred at an Altar; alledged, that in the New Testament Christ is not to be Sacrificed, but his Body and Blood spiritually to be Eaten and Drunken in the Ministration of the Holy Supper. — *Altho' Old Writers do sometimes term it an Altar, yet they are to be Expounded to speak Abusivè and Improprîe.* For like as they expound themselves when they term the Lord's Supper a Sacrifice, that they mean by the word Sacrificium, or Sacrifice, Recordationem Sacrificii, the Remembrance of a Sacrifice, or Similitudinem Sacrificii, the Likeness of a Sacrifice, and not properly a Sacrifice: So of the Altar; Furthermore, an Altar hath relation to a Sacrifice, for they be Correlativa; so that of Necessity, if we allow an Altar, we must grant a Sacrifice. They therefore who would not allow an Altar,

tar, did not grant any *Proper Sacrifice* in this Holy Communion. The *Mass-Priests* are most glad of the *Hope of Retaining the Altar, &c.* meaning thereby to make the Communion as like the *Mass* as they can, and so to continue the Simple in their former Errors. *Strype's Annals*, cap. 12.

Mr. *Hooker*, Eccl. Pol. l. v. c. 78. speaking of the Use of the word *Priest*, which *T. Cartwright* condemned, says thus : *Seeing then that Sacrifice is now no part of the Church-Ministry, how should the Name of Priesthood be thereunto rightly applied ?* He allows the Use of the Word at large, and by way of Correspondence, as *St. Paul* speaks of the *Flesh of Fishes* : and then he adds : *The Fathers of the Church, with like security of Speech, call usually the Ministry of the Gospel, Priesthood, in regard of that which the Gospel hath proportionable to the ancient Sacrifice, namely, the Communion of the Blessed Body and Blood of Christ, altho' it hath Properly now no Sacrifice.*

The Learned Dr. *J. Reynolds*, in his Conference mentioned above, p. 464. Vindicating our English Translation in not using the Word *Priest*, says : *Seeing our Language doth mean by [Priests] Sacrificers, which in their, the Apostles Language, are called ιερείς, and they never give the Name of ιερείς to the Pastors of the then Church ; it followeth, that they give them not the Name of Priests. Or if you reply, that they give them that Name, because they called them ιεροδούλους, whence our English Name of Priest is derived : yet you cannot say that they called them Priests, as the Name of Priest hath relation to Sacrifice. — For so the word Priest must have two meanings, the one of ιεροδούλος, the other of ιερείς ; whereof the one is given by the Apostles, but doth not imply authority to Sacrifice ; the other doth imply authority to Sacrifice, but is not given by the Apostles. And this was the current Sense of all our Divines, and consequently of the Best of them,*

unto Archbishop *Laud's* Time. And he, when it was much for his purpose to shew how far the Protestants did concur with the Church of *Rome* in acknowledging this Sacrament to be a Sacrifice, did not pretend that any of our Divines owned the Elements to be Sacrificed; but speaks thus of it in his Controversy with *Fisher*, p. 199. *For at, or in the Eucharist, we offer up to God three Sacrifices; One by the Priest only, that's the Commemorative Sacrifice of Christ's Death, represented in Bread broken, and Wine poured out. Another is by the Priest and People jointly, and that is the Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving; And the Third by every Man for himself alone, viz. his Body and Soul in a Religious Obedience.* Now that by the first of these, Archbishop *Laud* did not intend that the Protestants maintained a Material Sacrifice of the Bread and Wine broken and poured out, is undeniable from his Expression, who places the *Commemorative Representation*, not in Offering, but in *Breaking the Bread*, and *Pouring out the Wine*; which he knew to be the true Doctrine of the Protestants. And consequently in all these Three there is no *Proper Sacrifice*; neither will his foregoing Words admit these to be taken otherwise: *Christ did Institute and Command a Memory of this Sacrifice in a Sacrament.* And the Authorities in the Margin of that Page shews us again, that he did not intend a Real Material Sacrifice, but only the *Commemoration* or *Representation* of such a one by a Sacrament. He first cites out of Mr. *Fox* the Words of *John Lambert* a Martyr, in the Reign of King *Henry VIII.* who said, *Christ is said to be offered in the Sacrament only, because his Oblation once Offered is thereby Represented; and afterward, it is a Memorial or Representation thereof.* He adds some Citations out of Archbishop *Cranmer*, whose Principles as to this Matter we have seen already. And then out of Bishop *Jewel* these Words;
That

That the Ministration of the Holy Communion is sometimes of the Ancient Fathers, called an Unbloody Sacrifice, not in respect of any Corporal or Fleshly Presence that is imagined to be there without Blood-shedding; but for that it **Representeth** and Reporteth to our Minds that One and Everlasting Sacrifice that Christ made in his Body on the Cross. And in his Trial, p. 115. in Answer to the Charge of the Scotch Commissioners, he speaks thus of this Sacrament: For a Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving, no Man doubteth but that it is to be Offered up: Nor doth any Man of Learning question it that I know, but that according to our Saviour's own Command, we are to do whatsoever is done in this Office as a Memorial of his Body and Blood offered up and shed for us. Now it is one thing to offer up his Body, and another to offer up the Memorial of his Body with our Praise and Thanksgiving for that infinite Blessing. Afterwards, speaking of Bellarmine's Notion, he says; If Bellarmine means no more by the Oblation of the Body and Blood of Christ, than a **Commemoration and Representation** of that great Sacrifice offered up by Christ himself, it is well, for so the Sacrament is. But if Bellarmine go farther than this, and mean by it, that the Priest offers up that which Christ himself did, and not a **Commemoration** of it only, he is Erroneous in that, and can never make it good. Thus Archbishop Laud pleads for no more than a **Commemoration or Representation** of Christ's Sacrifice, but never pretended that the Proper Sacrifice of the Elements was the Doctrine of the Church of England, or of any of our Protestant Divines. When indeed he speaks his own Personal Sentiments, he says in the Page last cited: As for the Oblation of the Elements, that's fit and proper, and I am sorry for my part that it is not in the Book of England. Whatever the Archbishop might intend by that Dislike, he must either grant that such Oblation of the Elements is no part of the Institution; or else he must believe that

that the Church of *England* which confessedly makes no such Oblation, has not the *Sacrament* rightly and duly administred. And if his own private Opinion was so much against the Sense of his Church; the Bishop of *Oxford* was under no Obligations to depart from his *established Rule* to follow him.

Bishop *Bedell* of *Kilmore* in *Ireland*, speaking of the Priesthood, says, p. 164. of his *Life*. *As for the other Power*, he had been speaking of Absolution, to Sacrifice, if it be any otherwife than celebrating the Commemoration of *Christ's Sacrifice* once offered on the Cross, it is no Part of the Priesthood or Ministry of the New Testament, but a superfluous Addition thereunto. He confirms the same, p. 469. from the Master of the Sentences; and again, p. 470. from this Confession of *Melchior Canus*. The Lutherans do not wholly deny the Sacrifice, but grant a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, which they call the Eucharist. They will have none for Sins, which they call Propitiatory. If he had put hereunto, unless it be a Mystery, he had rightly express'd the Opinion of the Protestants. By Mystery he seems to intend the Mystical Representation of *Christ's Propitiation* on the Cross for Sin. I need look after no more Authorities, in that Mr. *L.* gives up this Doctrine, p. 22. as wretchedly neglected among the Reformed. If so, then I am sure it may very justly pass for a Popish Doctrine; until these Gentlemen who pretend it can do it more effectually, by giving better Proof of its Truth than they have hitherto done from Scripture and Primitive Antiquity.

3. We are next to enquire whether our Office for the Communion favours this pretended Sacrifice of the Sacramental Elements. Now if ours be in Truth a Protestant Service, we can hardly expect to find in it a Doctrine or Practice that is

wretchedly neglected by all the Reformed. Nor would any one look for the Oblation of the Bread and Wine in that Service-Book where Archbishop Laud owned it was not to be found.

But since the Restoration of King Charles II, some Alterations have been made in our Rubric of the Communion-Office : And these are taken by Mr. L. and some others, in Favour of this Oblation of the Elements ; and made use of to support this Doctrine of a Proper Sacrifice. The Church-Wardens are directed reverently to bring to the Priest, officiating, the Alms for the Poor, and other Devotions of the People, in a decent Bason, who shall humbly present and place it upon the Table. And when there is a Communion, the Priest shall then place upon the Table so much Bread and Wine as he shall think sufficient. And whereas we prayed God before to accept our Alms, it is now our Alms and Oblations. Which last Word these Gentlemen would refer to the Bread and Wine. And this pretended Oblation too must be again brought to Mind in the Prayer after Consecration, to be a Material Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving, (*Bishop Oxf. Ch. Conf. p. 21.*) A direct Contradiction not only to the Sense of the Composers of that Prayer, but in a manner to all common Sense. We must not wonder that these Writers wretchedly pervert the Scriptures and Fathers, who can thus miserably abuse and misrepresent the very Office of their own Church and their own Age. The Lord Bishop of *Norwich* in his Charge to his Clergy, *Ann. Dom. 1709.* has excellently well set these Things right, and shewn the Injustice of all such Representations of the Alterations that have been made. But because the Defenders of this proper Sacrifice seem not satisfied with his Lordship's Account, I beg leave to confirm it by a few more Observations. As,

x. When

1. When we pray God *to accept our Alms and Oblations*, by *Oblations* to intend the Sacramental Elements, is a manner of speaking altogether unknown to the Church of *England*. Where do these Gentlemen find the Bread and Wine by our Church called *Oblations*? Why then should they put such a Sense on these Words here, as was never used in our Church before, nor that I know of, is used by it in any other Part of all our Offices and Liturgy? Nor can it possibly bear this Sense here, without maintaining that our Governors intended by it to alter the Doctrine of our Church as erroneous and deficient in the Essentials of this Sacrament before. And if they will pretend this, which is unavoidable, if they will make the Bread and Wine Oblations; I must desire them to consider,

2. That the Bishops in Convocation, who made these Alterations, were so far from thinking of any such Defects in our former Service, that they expressly declare against it, and affirm that in the Alterations of the Rubrics they chiefly aimed at the *greater Reverence and Decency of Divine Worship*. In the Preface which was approved of in Convocation as well as the Changes, they speak thus: *Of the Alterations proposed to us, we have rejected all such as were of dangerous Consequence, as secretly striking at some Established Doctrine*. And when they set forth the Reasons of these Alterations, they affirm, we were not enforced so to do by any Strength of Argument, convincing us of the Necessity of making the said Alterations. Then it's without Contradiction evident, that they saw no Necessity of making the Bread and Wine an Oblation. For, say they, *we are fully persuaded in our Judgments, and we here profess it to the World, that the Book as it stood before Established by Law, doth not contain any thing in it contrary to the Word of*
F 2 God,

God, or to sound Doctrine. And yet methinks this could not have been said, if that Holy Sacrament had not been rightly Administred according to Christ's Institutions. They had no Design then, it seems, to alter the Doctrine of the Church of England in any Particular. Their General Aim was, the Preservation of Peace and Unity in the Church, and the Procuring of Reverence, and Exciting of Piety and Devotion in the Publick Worship of God, and the cutting off Occasion from them that seek Occasion of Carvil and Quarrel against the Liturgy of our Church. — And most of the Alterations were made for the better Direction of them that were to Officiate in any Part of the Divine Service, which is chiefly done in the Kalendar and Rubricks, or--- But, say some, what other Reason could there be of putting Oblations to Alms, if the one has not respect to the Bread and Wine, as the other has to the Money collected? I Answer, by observing,

2. That this was done, as the Preface well expresses it, to procure Reverence, and to excite Piety and Devotion in the Publick Worship of God, by making the Alms and Offerings an Oblation, which they were not before. Before they were Alms gathered by the Church-wardens, and put into the Poor Man's Box, and often with little Reverence, Piety or Devotion. Now they are Received in a Decent Bason, and to be Reverently brought to the Priest, who humbly Presents and Places them on the Table: and so of Alms and Devotions they become Oblations also. This Observation will appear very just and proper, if we do but look into the Rubrick of the Scotch Common-Prayer-Book, which led the way to some of our Alterations. That Rubrick runs thus: *While the Presbyter distinctly pronounceth some or all of these Sentences for the Offertory, the Deacon, or one of the Church-wardens, shall receive the Devotions of the People there present in a Bason* pro-

provided for that purpose. And when all have Offered, he shall Reverently bring the said Bason, with the Oblations therein, and Deliver it to the Presbyter, who shall humbly Present it before the Lord, and set it upon the Holy Table. Here are your Oblations, and the Reason why they are called so. And altho' the said Scotch Common-Prayer-Book adds, *The Presbyter shall then offer up, and place the Bread and Wine prepared for the Sacrament on the Lord's Table:* Yet our English Convocation were so far from intending the Elements to be made an Oblation, that they leave out the Words *Offer up*, and only direct, that the Priest shall place upon the Table so much Bread and Wine as he shall think sufficient, without offering them up. This, I think, is Evidence enough that the word *Oblations* refers to the Alms, not to the Elements.

4. Lastly, If the Church had thought it necessary, by virtue of Christ's Institution, to make the Bread and Wine an Oblation to God; it should then have provided, that no Sacrament should be Administred without such an Oblation, nor any Bread and Wine be used but what is so offered up. The Contrary to both which are expressly directed. In the Communion for the Sick the whole Office is to be performed, not only without any Offertory, but also without that Prayer in which the pretended Oblation of the Elements is said to be made; and yet I hope that such a Sacrament is rightly and duly Administred. And in Publick Communions at the Church it often happens, that the Consecrated Bread and Wine are all spent, before that all have Communicated. In which Case, altho' more is to be Consecrated, yet the Minister is not directed to say again the Prayer of accepting our Alms and Oblations, but to begin at the latter End of the Prayer of Consecration. A plain Proof this is, that our

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Church

Church never intended to make a Proper Sacrifice or Oblation of the Sacramental Bread and Wine. This is only to be done by *Expounding away our Offices and Rubricks.*

As to the Propitiation of this Pretended Material Sacrifice, they who defend it know not what to make of it : It makes Satisfaction, and it makes no Satisfaction for Sin : It *renders God Propitious*, tho' it *makes no Expiation*, which I take to be a Distinction without a Difference. And at last with Mr. L. it dwindles into a *Means of procuring Remission of Sin*. So also is Baptism, Faith, Prayer, Repentance, the Love of God, and the Love of our Neighbour, and Good Works, and Christian Duties of every Sort. But then we Protestants are not used to call these things *Propitiatory*, but *Undeserving Performances*. However, if this were all that was intended, it is the Language, rather than the Thing it self, that we except against. The Blessed Sacrament, as a Federal Duty, had doubtless a greater Influence than the rest. And we have been taught from our Infancy to believe the Sacraments to be not only *Means of Grace*, but also *Pledges to assure us thereof*. But in what Sense they can be said to be *Propitiatory*, or to make *Satisfaction for Sin*, more than other Duties ; I am yet to learn, and desire Mr. L. or any of his Friends, to instruct me.

III. Another new Doctrine his Lordship thought fit to caution his Clergy against, was that of the *Necessity of Sacerdotal Absolution for the Remission of the Sins of the Penitent*. For it has been taught that the Penitent, according to the Christian Covenant, cannot expect Remission without this Sacerdotal Absolution, as a Condition ordinarily Necessary ; that Repentance and Conversion cannot blot out Sins without it. This the Bishop thought he had good Reason to Censure as agreeable

agreeable to the Doctrine of the Church of Rome, but not to what our Church teaches or requires in any of its Offices.

Dr. B. and Mr. L. had said so much on this Subject, that they thought themselves concerned to vindicate it, and to tax his Lordship as the Mistaken Person in this Doctrine. And they write with such Assurance, that at first View, one would almost think that they had a great deal to say for themselves. But a Disputant in a wrong Cause, is never more likely to be thought in the Right, than when he Amuses his Readers with General Expressions, that in one or two or more Senses may be true, and yet not in that particular one that is controverted.

Dr. B. and Mr. L. have taken great Pains to prove that Christ has left to his Apostles, and the Bishops and Priests their Successors, a Power to Remit Sins. And in the Certainty of this, imagine that they effectually prove that *Sacerdotal Absolution* which they plead for. The first Head of Dr. B's Sermon is, that *our Saviour did leave with the Apostles a Power to Remit Sins.* And the Second, that *this Power was transmitted to their Successors, and continues in the Church to this day.* Mr. L. says the same. (*Sacerd. Powers, p. 5.*) And he Expostulates with the Lord Bishop of Oxford thus: *Has not Christ established such a Power as that of Sacerdotal Absolution in his Church?* (p. 22.) I will Answer this Expostulation in the Words of Archbishop Usher: *We acknowledge most willingly, that the Principal Part of the Priest's Ministry is exercised in the Matter of Forgiveness of Sins. The only Question is, the manner how this Part of their Function is executed by them, and of the Bounds and Limits thereof; which the Pope and his Clergy have for their own Advantage enlarged beyond all Measure of Truth and Reason.* (Answ. to Jes. Chal. p. 114. Ed. 1631.)

I wish the Pope and his Clergy had been the only Persons guilty of this Corruption ; but it is found that they are not. There are however, we own, several Ways in which God has left to his Church a Power by their Bishops and Ministers to Absolve Penitent Sinners, and to give them Assurance of the Remission of their Sins.

1. It may be done by the Ministry of the Word, and by Applying to the Consciences of Men the Promises of the Gospel. It is one peculiar Right, Privilege and Authority, which all Christian Ministers have, to Preach the *Word of Reconciliation*, and to Proclaim in the Name of Christ *Repentance and Remission of Sins* to all People. (2 Cor. 5. 18.) In this Sense the *Ministry of Reconciliation* is committed to them. *Now are ye clean through the Word that is spoken unto you, said Christ to his Disciples.* (John 15. 3.) Which, as Archbp. Usher very well observes (p. 139.) must be understood, not only *Operatively*, as the *Preaching of it is a Means of Conversion*, and of *Conferring God's Spirit*, and of *working Faith and Repentance* ; on which Account St. Paul calls it the *Power of God unto Salvation to every one that Believeth*, Rom. 1. 16. but also *Declaratively*, as it do's *Declare God's Pleasure to such as Believe and Repent, and in his Name Certify them, and give Assurance to their Consciences, that their Sins are forgiven them.* (p. 142.) This made St. Jerome say, that the *Apostles did loose the Cords of Sin by the Word of God, and the Testimonies of the Scripture, and Exhortations to Viriue.* (Com. in Esa. L. 6. c. 14.) And to this he applies our Saviour's Commission : *Whatsoever ye loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven* ; for God will make good his own Promises. St. Ambrose also says, that *Sins are Remitted by the Word of God.* (de Abel & Cain, l. 2. c. 4.) And this I take to be the true Foundation, or indeed rather to

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Constitute the Nature of that *Declarative Absolution* which the Protestants maintain, and is, as much as Preaching, a Peculiar Branch of their Christian Ministry: It is the λόγος & ἡσάλλαγις, and the διακονία ἡσάλλαγις; the Word and the Ministry of Reconciliation that belong to them, (2 Cor. v. 18, 19.)

2. The Ministers of Christ also have a Power of *Absolving Sinners* by the Sacraments. One of the great Benefits of Baptism is the *Washing away of Sins*. And as the Christian Minister is the Proper, Lawful Administrator of it, he has in that a Power of *Remitting Sins* by the Efficacy of it. To this St. Cyprian particularly alludes, and applies those very Words of Christ which some Persons now produce in behalf of a *Sacerdotal Absolution* of a quite different Strain. (Ep. 69. ad Magn. p. 185. Ed. Ox.) For as in Baptism every one has his Sins remitted, our Lord proves and declares in his Gospel, that those only can Remit Sins who have the Holy Spirit. For after his Resurrection, sending his Disciples, he speaks to them, and says, As my Father sent me, so send I you: And when he had said this, he Breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever Sins ye Remit, they are Remitted unto them; and whose soever Sins ye Retain, they are Retained. In which place He shews, that He only can Baptize and Remit Sins, who has the Holy Ghost. He do's the same in his LXXIII^d Ep. ad Julianum. And Firmilianus in an Epistle to Cyprian, Ep. LXXV. says the same. So also do's Tertullian, Advers. Marcion. L. I. cap. 28. There is also a Remission of Sins in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; which as it is a Federal Ordinance, and a Seal of God's Covenant, and an Instituted Duty and Means of holding Communion with God and Christ; Exhibits, without question, to all Sincere and Devout Communicants, the Benefits of his Passion, of which Remission of Sins is one.

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3. There is a Power also of Communicating to all true Penitents the *Absolution and Remission* of their Sins by *Prayer*. And accordingly it was the Custom in Ancient Times for Penitents to have the Prayers of the Church put up to God for the Pardon and Absolution of their Sins. And to this St. Cyprian alludes, (*de Lapsis*, p. 436.) when he admonishes the Lapsed to Repentance in these Words: *Join your Tears with ours; Add your Sighs to ours; We Intreat you, that We may Beseech God for you. We first turn those Prayers to you, by which we beg of God to have Mercy on you.* After such Prayers as these, it was usual to admit those who had given Offence by their Sins, to the Sacred Communion again, especially if it was with the Approbation of the Bishop and his Clergy; of which I shall speak more by and by.

4. There is still a farther Power and Authority of Absolution, or Remission of Sins, by a *Remitting* of the *Spiritual Censures of the Church*, which may be inflicted on Scandalous Offenders for their Sins, and are taken away upon Repentance. Of this we have a Remarkable Instance in the Incestuous *Corinthian*, who had been guilty of Fornication with his *Father's Wife*. Whom St. Paul therefore Commanded *to be delivered up unto Satan*, 1 Cor. v. 5. and afterward upon his Humiliation and Repentance *Forgave*, or Remitted to him *this Sin*, 2 Cor. ij. 10. by receiving him into the Communion of the Church again. This takes place only where the Offender had some way or other brought Scandal on his Profession, and thereupon had been Bound by the *Sentence and Censure* of the Church, and in some Degree or other Prohibited and Restrained from its Communion. The Remitting of which Sentence, and Admitting into Communion again,

again, is what the Primitive Christians commonly intended by *Absolution*.

The Reader may see then that there are a great many Senses and Respects in which Christ makes use of his Ministers in the Remission of Sins ; and absolves Sinners from their Offences by their Ministrations.

But all these together will not satisfy some Persons among us. There is over and above all these a farther Power of *Sacerdotal Absolution* contended for. And that is,

5. Lastly, *A Power or Authority committed by Christ to his Apostles, and by them to all Christian Bishops and Ministers their Successors, of Actually pardoning Sinners in Christ's Name, by Virtue of a Judicial Sentence pronounced in some certain Form of Words by the Minister, upon the Pronouncing of which the Penitent obtains an actual Discharge from all his Sins in Heaven, (Dr. Bret. Serm. p. 10, 11, 16, 34, 35.)* And this Power is affirmed to be so necessary in the Ordinary means of Salvation ; as that no Christian can regularly obtain Mercy and Salvation without it, (*Sacerd. Powers, p. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.*) A Power says Dr. Bret, to pardon or forgive Sins, or else by not pardoning to bind them more closely on the Sinner, so as that he should not be released from his Sin, or pardoned by God, till they, the Priests, had released him also, (*Serm. p. 11.*) This is the Sacerdotal Power of Absolution, which some Men among us, both Clergy and Laymen so strenuously assert, and so zealously plead for. It differs from all the forementioned Instances or Ways of remitting Sins in these Respects:

1. It is an Absolution from Sins, that may be given neither by Preaching nor Prayer, nor by the Holy Sacraments, nor by a Discharge from the Sentence of Excommunication, but by an *Authoritative*

tative Judicial Sentence, which the Priest pronounces upon the Sinner's Case, and thereby discharges him from all his past Sins. This Dr. B. apparently contends for, when he says, *if the Bishops and Presbyters have a Right to pardon Sins by the Ministration of the Word and Sacraments, they must have a Right to pardon them by Absolution*, (Serm. p. 24.) Nor could he intend any less than this, when he told his Audience that he was preaching to them *a Doctrine* that *they had been but little used to hear*, (p. 13.) And the Power of such Absolution is extended to all Sins without Exception.

2. This Absolution is made a *means* Ordinarily necessary to the Remissions of Sins ; and no Pardon is to be had without it. *Repentance and Conversion cannot blot out Sins* without it ; but receives its Efficacy from the Absolution of the Priest.

3. This verbal *Judicial Sentence* of Absolution is not only affirmed to be *necessary* to the Forgiveness of Sins, but even *Effective* of that Remission, and Operates in that Grace ; so that the Pardon is *actually and effectually given* thereby, (*Sacerd. Powers*, p. 12, 22.) And the Priest does *actually release from Sin*, and convey the Pardon, (*Bish. Oxf. Ch. Confid.* p. 40.)

4. Lastly, This Absolution is affirmed to give the Pardon so absolutely, so *Actually* and certainly, that it is *at that time sealed in Heaven* ; and gives the Sinner as good an Assurance of it, as *if an Angel was sent from Heaven to tell him so*, (*Bish. Oxf. Ch. Conf.* p. 35, 39. Dr. B. Serm. p. 35, 36, 37.) This is the Sacerdotal Absolution so vigorously contended for. And if Mr. L. would confine his Thoughts to this, when he asks whether *Sacerdotal Absolution* be an *instituted Means of Remission of Sins* ? I would answer him plainly, No. The Christian Religion knows no such Institution as that of *conveying an Actual Effectual Absolution of Sins before God*, by a *Judicial Sentence*

tence pronounced by the Priest, and distinct from the Ministration of the Word and Sacraments. The Primitive Christians were wholly Strangers to it, it's a scandalous Abuse of the Power of the Priest, and in truth is downright Popery.

To make good this Assertion, I shall set my self,

- I. To examine the Arguments that are brought to defend it.
- II. To shew what strong, and I think, unanswerable Objections there are against it.

I. The Arguments brought for it are chiefly these Two.

1. It must be included in that general Power which Christ gave to his Apostles and their Successors, when he said unto them, *As my Father sent me, so send I you*; in which Words he gave them *all the Power that he himself was vested with from the Father*, (Dr. B.'s Serm. p. 12, 13, 16, 17.) That he himself had this Power on Earth, as the Son of Man, to forgive Sins, is undeniable, because Christ himself has said it in expresse Words, (Matt. ix. 6.) Now if he did not give them *all the Power that he himself had*, how could he say, *As my Father sent me, so send I you*, (Mar. ii. 10.) And if he did give them *all the same Power* that he himself had, then he must give them this Power of absolving by a Judicial Sentence which he himself exercised. In answer to this Argument, we must consider in what Sense and how far it can be truly said, that Christ gave his Apostles and their Successors *the same Power* that he himself had, when he said unto them, *As my Father sent me, so send I you*. Dr. B. lays great Stress on this, and would have it thought, that Christ has vested the Apostles, and all Ministers by them, with
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all that Power and Authority in the Remission of Sins which he himself exercised, and which he himself was vested with by the Father, with Relation to the Church, (Serm. p. 17.) This looks like an Equality of Power, not only with Christ but with God the Father also, who sent the Son, as the Son sent the Apostles. But however unguardedly Dr. B. expressed himself at first, he seems to have been afterwards aware of the Absurdity, and found it necessary to explain himself, that *he did not intend to have it thought that the Apostles were made equal in Power with Christ, but only that he constituted them his Commissioned Officers to act under him, and in his Name,* (Vind. p. 4.) Be it so; but then we are at a loss to know what he means by a Power in several Persons that is one and the same, and yet *not equal*. If he means a Power that is the same in Kind, but different in *Measure and Degree*; I readily admit of the Distinction, but it will do this Cause no good. In that all this Dispute turns upon the *Measure and Degree* of Power that Ministers have in the Remission of Sins. It is all the same Power and Authority in Kind, as it respects the Absolution of Sinners; but differs in the *Degree* of Power committed. Christ had an absolute Power of pardoning Sinners, in what way and by what *Methods* He in his Divine Wisdom thought fit, by the use of Sacraments, or without them. The Apostles had also a Power in pardoning Sins in such a way and by such *Rules* as their Commission authorized and directed them. But without or beyond the Commission there is no Power or Authority. To pardon Sinners by the *Ministry of the Word and Sacraments* is one Degree or Measure of Authority, and to pardon them without the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments is another and a superior Degree of the same Authority. The one is a Power as much superior to the other

other in Measure and Degree, as a Power of working without Means is superior to a Power of working with them. If therefore it will not be insisted on, that the Apostles had the same *Equality* of Power with Christ, we can never learn what Authority they had in pardoning Sins, by what Christ himself exercised, but must look into their Commission, and see what is contained in that. Now,

2. This is the second Thing alledged in Defence of this *Judicial Power* of Absolution. That it is *that Power which Christ committed to his Apostles and their Successors after his Resurrection, when he said unto them, Whose soever Sins ye remit they are remitted, &c. (Sacerd. Pow. p. 11, 12.)* In which Words 'tis plain that the **Authority of Remitting Sins** which Christ gave his Apostles is more than merely Declarative; --- it is the Apostles Act of Forgiving by Virtue of Christ's Authority, whose Delegates they are. It has been granted already, that this Commission gives Authority to Ministers in the Remission of Sins.

The only Point in Dispute is about the Degree of Power and the *Manner* of absolving; and whether these Words do give an Authority to absolve uncensured Penitents by a *judicial Sentence of the Priest distinct from the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments*. Dr. B. seems to think they do, for the Reason before alledg'd, *viz.* because Christ himself did exercise such a Power, and practise such Absolution, and gave to his Apostles *all the Power that he himself had, as Head of the Church, (Serm. p. 12.)* It is not to be denied that Christ himself forgave Sins in this way. But this is so far from proving it to be a Branch of that Ordinary Power of Absolution, which was to be continu'd in the Church throughout all Ages; that I find the Fathers look'd on it as one of those extraordinary miraculous Powers which Christ exercised in Testimony of his

his *knowing the Secrets of the Heart*, and thereby of his being the Son of God.

Irenæus (L. v. c. 17.) speaking of Christ's saying when the Man was cured of the Palsy, *That ye may know that the Son of Man hath Power on Earth to forgive Sins*; observes thus: *Peccatum igitur remittens, hominem quidem curavit, semetipsum autem manifeste ostendit quis esset, &c.* In Pardoning the Sin he healed the Man, and also Evidently discovered who he was: For if none can forgive Sins but God alone, and yet our Lord did forgive them, and heal the Man, to confirm the Validity of his Absolution, it is manifest that He is the Word of God. *Tertullian* has the same Argument, (*adv. Marc. L. iv. c. 10.*) and so has *Novatian* (c. 12.) and thereby proves Christ to be God. *Quod si, cum nullius sit nisi Dei, cordis nosse secreta, Christus secreta conspicit cordis; quod si cum nullius sit nisi Dei, peccata dimittere, idem Christus peccata dimittit — meritò Christus est Deus.* If none but God can know the secrets of the heart, and Christ did see into the secrets of the heart; if none but God can forgive Sins, and yet Christ did forgive Sins — assuredly Christ is God. If therefore such Remission of Sins be an Immediate Act of the Divine Power of Jesus Christ, and which he exercised miraculously in proof of his Divinity; it must not be pretended that such a Power of Absolution is a Branch of that Ordinary Authority which was to be conveyed to his Apostles and their Successors for ever; and consequently comes not into the Commission, *Whose soever Sins ye Remit, &c.* But *St. Paul* conceived he had such a Power when he Forgave the Incestuous Corinthian his Sin. (Serm. p. 19, 20. Sacerd. Powers, p. 22.) I am Amaz'd that Dr. B. and Mr. L. should think this Instance at all to their Purpose, when that Absolution was a Release of a Sentence of Excommunication, that had been passed before. This is not the Absolution that these
Gentle

Gentlemen are contented with ; and yet it cannot be pleaded in Countenance of any other. In short then, as none of their Arguments do prove that Christ Jesus in his Commission to the Apostles, did give the Christian Ministers a *Power of absolving Sinners by a Judicial Sentence of Absolution, where no Church Censures had pass'd* : I would now,

II. Offer some Objections, and I think strong ones, against our claiming and insisting on such a Power. And they are these,

1. I do not find any such manner of Absolution either claimed or practised by the Primitive Church ; who if Christ had intended them such an Authority, could scarce either have been ignorant of it, or neglected it. I find indeed a great deal among them about Remission of Sins by Baptism, and by the Prayers of the Church, and the Application of God's Promises, and by the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and by releasing the Sentence of Excommunication, but nothing farther.

As we are all born in Sin, so the first A& of Sacerdotal Absolution is perform'd in Baptism. But as to the Sins committed after it, I do not find any Sacerdotal Absolution required or practised for pardoning the common Frailties and Infirmities of human Life : But as our Offences are first remitted by our Admission into the Communion of the Church, so the Continuance of that Grace seems to have been unquestionable, by our Continuance in that Communion, until some infamous Crime deprives us of the blessed Privileges and Advantages of our Christian Covenant. When the Lives of Christians grew loose and scandalous, then, that both the Honour of Religion and the Safety of Men's Souls might be duly regarded, the Church passed Censures for Offenders, and provided certain Rules and

Degrees of Humiliation and Repentance ; where-
upon they were to be restored both to the Favour
of God and the Peace of his Church. For such
and such Offences they were to be rejected from
the Communion of the Faithful, and not to be re-
stored until after such and such Acts of Repentance
performed. And both the Crimes for which they
were to be denied Communion, and the several
Acts of Repentance, upon which they were to be
restored, were determined by the Laws and Canons
of the Church. *Those that are not Offenders ought to*
continue in their State, Ap. Const. L. 2. Cap. 13. But
when you see one to offend, shew your Resentments, and
command him to be cast out, --- afterward having ex-
amined if he be fit to be admitted into the Church again,
having afflicted himself with fasting for two, three, five
or seven Weeks, according to his Crime, then Absolve
him, ib. cap. 16. The manner of performing the
publick Humiliation for great Crimes, was by the
Ancients call'd *Exomologesis*, and is described by *Ter-*
tullian, de *Pœnitentia*, cap. 9, 10. And by *Albasi-*
neus in his Notes upon that Place. But what we
are chiefly concern'd in is, the Manner of absol-
ving these Penitents, and the Ministers Office there-
in. Which was to see the Work of Penance per-
formed, and then by Prayers and Imposition of
Hands, to admit the Penitent into Communion a-
gain. So that as his Absolution consisted in being
restored to the Divine Offices and Communion of
the Church, the Ministers Authority therein was in
his Admission by Prayer and Imposition of Hands.
Thus *Eusebius* tells us that St. *John* readmitted or ab-
solved the young Man, whom he had converted
from his notorious wicked Life, and who in St.
John's Absence had revolted ; but upon his return
was brought back to Repentance. *Αὐτὴν τὴν δεξιὰν*
ὡς ὡς τῆς μετανόιας καθαρθέντων καταφιᾶν, ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκκλη-
σίαν

εὐαν ἐπανήγαγε. Καὶ δεξιὰς αὐτοῦ ἐξαισεύθη, &c.
 (Hist. Eccl. L. III. cap. 23.) He kiss'd his Hand as now
 purified by Repentance, and brought him into the Church,
 and beseeching God with continual Prayers, and striving
 with continual Fastings, and cherishing his Mind with
 various Exhortations, he ceased not till he had restored him
 to the Church. Tertullian also speaks of the Peni-
 tents throwing themselves down at the Feet of the Pres-
 byters, as beloved of God, and recommending to all the
 Brethren their Intercession and Deprecation of God's
 Wrath, (De Pæn. Cap. 9.) Presbyteris aduolui et ca-
 tis Dei adgeniculari, omnibus patribus legationes deprec-
 ationis sue injungere. The Apostolical Constitutions
 are more plain; Those who have offended rebuke, those
 who humble themselves with Fasting, relieve by a Re-
 mission of the Fault; him, who laments his Sin, receive,
 the whole Church praying for him, and by Imposition of
 Hands suffer him to continue in the Flock, the Church,
 for the time to come, (L. 2. cap. 18.) So again; O
 Bishop, as thou dost receive a Gentile into the Church by
 Baptism, after thou hast instructed him; so restore this Pe-
 nitent into the ancient Fold, when cleansed by Repentance,
 with Imposition of Hands, and all praying for him, (Ib.
 cap. 41.) The same is mentioned by St. Cyprian in
 four Epistles together, (16, 17, 18, 19.) in which
 the Imposition of Hands by the Bishop or Clergy,
 after the customary Humiliation and Confession,
 shews plainly, according to the Usage and Pra-
 ctice of those Times; that the Prayers and Interces-
 sion, or Deprecation of the Church, were chiefly
 depended on as to the effectual Absolution of the
 Sinner. This was the constant, and as far as I can
 yet find, the only Method of absolving for some
 Hundreds of Years in the Christian Church. A great
 many more Instances might be brought, if Occasi-
 on were, to confirm these. In regard to this U-
 sage, Penitents suing for Absolution were exhorted,

Exoratricem Ecclesiam deprecari ; to beg off God's Wrath by the Prayers of the Church ; and the Ministers Office herein was called *Sacerdotalis Reconciliatio*, (Pacian. de Pæn.) And it was look'd on as a great Irregularity and Disorder, if great Offences, that by the Canons were to exclude Men from the Communion, were remitted without this Public Penance and Public Absolution. The latter of which, as it consisted in a Re-admission into the Communion of the Church, so the Ministers Part in it was after having seen the Acts of Repentance performed, then by the Prayers and Imposition of Hands to re-admit him ; and if he wanted Consolation, to comfort him with the gracious Declarations of God's Word. Which as St. *John* is related to have done in the Re-admission of his Convert mentioned above, so it's taken notice of also in the Apostolical Constitutions. Ἐντεῖς γλυκέα φάρμακα ἐπιλωπύς, καὶ καταβρέκων λόγοις παρακλητικοῖς, (L. 2. cap. 41.) Pouring soft Medicines that may prevent Scars, and washing them with Words of Consolation. And as in all this it is easily seen how the Ministers Power in Absolution is all Ministerial ; so when they assumed greater Authority they were censured as too Pharisaical, and were told that Men in the Remission of Sins, only use their Ministry, but exercise no Right of any Authority ; --- *homines autem in remissione peccatorum Ministerium suum exhibent, non jus alicujus potestatis exercent*, (Hieron. Matt. cap. 16. Ambr. de Spir. Sanct. L. 3. c. 19.)

As to the Absolution of private Sinners, I do not find any greater Difference than what either the Nature or the Privacy of the Work required. If the Offence was not notorious, by which I mean such as the Canons of the Church had not animadverted on, the Remission of it seems to have been left to the Sinners own personal Contrition and

and Repentance, without any Interposition of the Ministers Office and Authority, unless where Admonition and Reproof were necessary. For so I understand those Words of the Apostolical Constitutions, *The Bishop must embrace those of his Flock, that are without Spots; and if they have Blemishes, let him either cure them, or if they be to be despaired of, let him cast them out, but not hastily cut them off,* (L. 2. cap. 37.) And although St. Cyprian does say, *Cum in minoribus peccatis agant peccatores pœnitentiam justo tempore,* &c. *That in lesser Sins the Sinners do the Acts of Repentance,* &c. (Ep. 16, 18.) By *minora Peccata*, I there understand such Sins as the Canons and Usage of the Church remitted with a shorter Penance and lesser Severity, than was required of those who had lapsed into Idolatry. If the Sin was very gross and heinous, the Minister required as many of these Penitential Acts as could well with Privacy be performed, and upon them the Offender was admitted to the Communion of the Church, as is before related. But forasmuch as private Sins were chiefly to be known by the Confession of the Party, labouring under the severe Convictions of Conscience; I do not see that any thing was required to be done that might expose such an one to open shame. But whether I am mistaken in that or no, our Business is chiefly to observe that there are no Footsteps of any other Method or Manner of absolving such Penitents, but by admitting them to the Communion, with Prayers and Imposition of Hands. The Learned *Morinus* (*De Pen. L. ix. c. 31.*) affirms the same Thing, and from what one may observe in the Absolution of sick and dying Penitents, who had not yet fulfill'd the time of their Penance; and therefore because in Extremities were to have their private Absolution; instead of being absolved by the Bishop assembled with his Clergy

and the Congregation round about him, as the public Absolution required, (*Cypr. Ep. 19.*) After an Acknowledgement of their Crime, and Imposition of Hands by the Priest, which was always attended with Prayer, they were admitted to partake of the Communion: And this was their Absolution. (*Ap. Conf. L. 2. c. 18.*) All was done by the Exercise of a Ministerial Office or Power; nor was there any Judicial Form or Authority of Absolution pretended, to until about the Ninth or Tenth Century at the soonest, and then complained of by many. And which is more to the Purpose, that Instance in the Ninth Century, of *Hincmar*, Bishop of *Rhemes*, sending Letters of Absolution to *Hildebold*, (*Dr. B.'s Vind. p. 23.*) who in other Letters to him had desired such, shews most plainly that the effectual Remission of his Sins was more to be ascribed to his Prayers than to his Absolution by Apostolical Authority. Why else did he, after he had given that, pray to God to forgive him by the Grace of his Holy Spirit; to deliver him from all Evil; to keep him in perpetual Peace, and guide him to eternal Life? This is so far agreeable to the Sense and Practice of the Ancient Church, that while the Ministry of the Clergy is made use of in the Absolution of Sinners, yet the Efficacy of it is ascribed to Prayer, and the actual Operation of it to the Holy Ghost.

If this were, as I have, I hope, sufficiently proved, the true State of the Primitive Discipline and Practice in the Absolution of Sinners, pursuant to Christ's Commission and without any Claim or Knowledge of a Judicial Authority therein: Then I think I have Reason to say that such a Judicial Authority of Absolving was not instituted or appointed by Jesus Christ; because unknown to the Primitive Christians.

2. My second Exception is, that no such Sacerdotal Absolution was ever look'd on or taught by any but the Church of *Rome*, as a *Means ordinarily necessary* to the Forgiveness of Sins. The imposing this as a Means ordinarily necessary to Salvation, is one of the most dangerous Corruptions of our Religion that that Church has introduced. How can that be thought necessary to the Forgiveness of Sins, which the Primitive Church for several hundred Years had no Knowledge of? This is to suppose the Primitive Christians, who, as nearest to the Fountain Head, were like to understand Christianity best, to have been ignorant in one of the main Fundamentals of it. This would be a severe Imputation. And yet it must carry all this, to assert a Power necessary to Salvation; which there are no Proofs, no Instances of in all the Primitive Ages of Christianity.

Our first Reformers, and our Divines since the Reformation, do plead for a Power of Absolution by Virtue of Christ's Commission. But as the greatest Part of them intend no more than a *Ministerial Power* by the Application of *God's Word and Sacraments*: So they maintain no other *Necessity* of it than as a Means of *comforting doubtful and disturbed Consciences*.

Arch. *Cranmer* as heartily recommends the Practice of receiving Sacerdotal Absolution, as any one that I know of; yet even in the Passages cited by Dr. B. (*Vind. p. 30.*) he only recommends it, *when a Man after Baptism hath grievously sinned, and doubteth in his Conscience, whether he be in the Favour of God or no, as oftentimes it happeneth*; and because then it is hard for him to trust to his own Imagination, — for an Opinion without God's Word is not a true Faith; he would have him go to one of the Ministers of the Church, and

knowledge and confess his Sin, and pray him, that according to God's Commandment he will give him Absolution, and comfort him with the Word of Grace and Forgiveness of his Sins. This is no more than a Ministerial Absolution, for comforting the doubtful Conscience. And again, (p. 31.) Wherefore good Children --- when your Sins do make you afraid and sadde, then seek and desyre Absolution and Forgiveness of Sins of the Ministers which have received a Commission and Commandment from Christ himself to forgive Men their Sins, and then your Consciences shall have Peace, and Tranquility, and Quieness. And afterwards, that our Saviour Christ did institute and appoint it for this Purpose, that our Consciences might thereby be Comforted and assured of the Forgiveness of Sins. But here is not one Word in all this, that this Absolution is appointed as a Means ordinarily necessary to a Pardon, and without which God will not forgive them: But that when a Man doubteth in his Conscience whether he be in God's Favour or no; and can hardly trust to his own Imagination; by the Judgment of his Minister and Authority of his Absolution, his Conscience might be comforted and assured of the Forgiveness of Sins.

Bishop Andrews, who ascribes also a great deal to the Authority of the Absolution, yet seems to found the Reason of it on the Scruples and Doubts that may possess Men's Minds: For most usual it is for Men at their Ends to doubt, not of the Power of remitting Sins, but of their own Disposition to receive it; and whether they have ordered the matter so, as that they be within the Compass of God's effectual Calling --- to whom it belongeth, p. 64, 65. As this is the Reason of it, so God gave it and penn'd it exceeding effectually --- to the end that thereby such poor Sinners as shall be Partakers of it, might have strong Consolation and perfect Assurance, not to waver in the Hope that is set before them.

Bishop

Bishop Hall, who is another of our Divines, whose Authority Dr. B. in the Vindication of his Sermon appeals to, calls it expressly in the Passages cited, *a Power not Sovereign and Absolute, but Limited and Ministerial, for quieting the Conscience of the Penitent.* And adds, *It cannot therefore but be a great Comfort and Cordial Assurance to the Penitent Soul, to hear the Minister of God, &c.* He calls it again *not so much a Precatory, as Declaratory Benediction of our Spiritual Fathers, sent us out of Heaven.* Thus, according to three in four of Dr. Brett's own Authorities, it is such a Power of Absolving, whereby the Doubtful and Troubled Conscience may have Comfort, and Hope, and Assurance of Pardon, more than the Sinner's own Private Thoughts or Imaginations can give: But it is not affirmed by any of them to be Necessary before God himself to the obtaining Pardon from Heaven. If Bishop Sparrow has advanced farther in this Matter, I leave him, as I do also Dr. Heylin, in the same Class with Dr. B. and Mr. R. L. whose Authorities I think my self under no Obligations to follow farther than either Scripture, Reason or Antiquity, can support them.

Other Divines we have of very great Note, and who if they did not declare against the Doctrines now in dispute, would be called *shining Lights*. The first of these that I shall mention is Mr. Hooker; who is so far from making the Sacerdotal Absolution by a Verbal Sentence, a Mean Ordinarily Necessary to Salvation, that he lays this down as one of the great Differences between Us and the Church of Rome as to this Matter: (*Book 6. Ed. 1662. p. 168, 169.*) *That they make all Sores seem incurable, unless the Priest have a Hand in them. So that except the Priest be willing, God has hampered himself by his Promise; and no Humiliation will prevail, nor help, till such time as the Pleasure of the Priest be known, till he have Signed us a Pardon.*

Pardon.— Thus the *Papacy maketh all Sin unpardonable which hath not the Priest's Absolution.* If this be true, Dr. B's and Mr. L's Sacerdotal Absolution must be Popery, as the Lord Bishop of Oxford justly hinted.

Archbishop *Laud*, who had no Inclination to depress the Power or Office of the Christian Priesthood, in exprefs Words declares, That as some impose no other Enforcement to receive Absolution, than their Christian Care to Ease their own Conscience shall lead them to: (*History of Troubles*, p. 107.) So if you mark it, you shall find that our Saviour Christ, who gives to the Priest full Power of the Keys, to Bind and Loose, that is, to receive Confession, and to Absolve, or not Absolve, as he sees Cause in the Delinquent; yet you shall not find any Command of his to enforce Men to come to the Priest to receive this Benefit. 'Tis enough that he has left Power in the Ministry of the Church, to give Penitent Christians this **Case, Safety and Comfort**, if they will receive it when they need. King *James* the First was also thought to speak with great Judgment; and what he said was very much approved, when he said, (*Bishop Barlow's Hampton-Court Confer.* p. 8.) That there being only two kinds of Absolution from God, the one General, the other Particular: For the first, all Prayers and Preachings do import an Absolution. For the Second, it is to be applied to Special Parties, who having committed a Scandal, and Repenting, are Absolved: Otherwise, where there precedes not either Excommunication or Penance, there needs no Absolution.

• Dr. *Hammond* also understands our Saviour's Words chiefly as the Primitive Church, and King *James* had done; (*Power of the Keys*, p. 447.) to include the Power of Binding and Loosing by Church-Censures, and the Relaxation of them; by Debarring or Admitting to the Sacraments and Divine Offices of the Church. But when he comes to the Case
of

of *Voluntary and Uncensured Penitents* : 1st, He makes the *Penitents Voluntary Confession*, and suffering himself to be *Bound by way of Penance*, to be left to his own *Liberty, Will or Choice* ; And, 2d, his *Absolution* to be propter *Majorem cautelam*, to satisfy his *Trembling Conscience*, and to assure him that God hath forgiven him. All the *Necessity* of it that he asserts, is to him whose *Conscience* either is not able to perform and go through the *Work of Inward Repentance* with God alone ; or is not able to satisfy it self with such Performance without the *Minister's Assistance* called in. To this Purpose he cites the Words of the Second Exhortation before the Communion ; the last of which are thus : *That by the Ministry of God's Word, he may receive Comfort, and the Benefit of Absolution, to the quieting of his Conscience, and avoiding all Scruple and Doubtfulness.* And then he immediately adds ; *All which being an Exhortation of the Church belonging to a Particular Case ; viz. that of a Scrupulous Doubting, Unsatisfied Conscience wanting Comfort ; or in Dr. Hammond's own Words, [When a Man by the Use of all Helps which are within his own reach, cannot attain to a Quiet of Conscience, or be satisfied that He is fit to receive the Holy Communion,] as they do imply that those foresaid Means, viz. Repentance and Confession to God, and Reconciliation with their Offended Brethren, may happily serve the Turn without opening his Case to the Minister, and consequently without Absolution ; So they are a fervent Exhortation to all, in case those Means prove not successful, to seek out, and make use of other Auxiliaries : viz. The Benefit of Absolution, which the Church signifies to be Beneficial to him that wanteth Comfort, by the Concurrent Judgment of his Minister upon his Case, to be Comforted as to his good Estate.* But if he can be satisfied in his Conscience, Repentance may happily serve his Turn without opening his Case to the Minister, and consequently without

out Absolution. This is Dr. *Hammond's Account* of the Church's Sense of the Necessity of Absolution. Necessary as a Means to quiet Uneasy Consciences, but not as a Means Ordinarily Necessary to our Peace with God. It was assuredly in view of such Authorities as these, that Archbishop *Tillotson* said, (Vol. xij. Serm. 12. p. 359.) That *the Protestants do not make the Absolution of the Priest at all Necessary to the Forgiveness of Sins, but only Convenient for the Satisfaction and Comfort of the Penitent.*

I think my Lord Bishop of *Oxford's Account* of our Church's Sense of the Necessity of Absolution, (*Charge, p. 12, 13.*) is very agreeable to this of these Great Men. And therefore I am at a Loss for a Good Reason why his Lordship should be so perty Expostulated with, as tho' he had even with Singularity come short of the Rules of our Church; when He had the Authority of such *shining Lights* to support the Judgment that he gave of them. But Dr. *B.* (*Append. p. 103.*) and Mr. *L.* (p. 28.) tell the Bishop, that the Church declares Absolution necessary to a Pardon, because *it daily uses it in its Service.* They might as well have said, that the Church makes the Reading every Day a certain Portion of *David's Psalms, Ordinarily Necessary* to our Peace with God, because She directs such a Portion to be read twice every Day in the Daily Service of the Church. If some People will not distinguish between what the Church appoints for Instruction, what for Comfort, and what for Necessary Duty, but will make all alike Necessary, who can help it? I cannot but think that any Bishop, even if his own Authority had not been enough, is yet sufficiently Justified by the Concurrent Sentiments of the Generality of our Divines, to assert no other Necessity of such *Sacerdotal Absolution*, than as a Means to *Quiet afflicted and doubtful Consciences*; but not as Necessary

Necessary to make our Peace with God. Nor indeed can any greater Strefs be laid on it, without running to another and a higher Pitch of Novelty and Popish Error. And that is the

3. Third Thing which I have to except against Mr. L. and Dr. B's Doctrine of *Sacerdotal Absolution*; viz. That they even ascribe a Real Efficacy to it, and make it not only a Means of *Assuring* us of a Pardon, but of *Conveying* our Pardon to us; whereby even Repentance it self owes its Success and Efficacy, under the Mediation of Jesus Christ, to the Authority of the Priest's Absolution. It is upon this Ground, and I think it can be upon no other, that Dr. B. (*Serm. p. 34.*) declares Repentance to be *Insufficient for our Pardon, without Absolution*. Repentance may *Qualify us for Receiving it*, but it cannot Assure us that we are actually Pardoned without the Priest's Absolution. And in his Vindication of that Sermon (*P. 51.*) he makes the *Priest's Declaration and Pronunciation to be Effectual to the Remission of Sins*. And Mr. L. that the Priest brings God's Pardon, and he has Authority *effectually* to apply it to Sinners: For the Priest's Pronouncing the Sentence is *Effective, Judicial, Insuring and Conveying the very Absolution or Remission it self*. (*Bp. Ox. Ch. Conf. p. 33, 34.*) So also says Cardinal Bellarmine, *Active & proximè, atque instrumentaliter efficit gratiam justificationis. De Sacrament. lib. 2. cap. 1.* It *actively, immediately and instrumentally effecteth the Grace of Justification*. Not so the Learned and Celebrated Dr. Hammond; he supposes that Repentance may happily do the Work and serve the Turn, without opening his Case to the Minister, and consequently without Absolution. Nay, in truth, not so, the Generality of the Popish Doctors, who, until the Council of Trent had bound them to it, were more Modest and Judicious.

So

So little Reason therefore have these Gentlemen to be offended with the Lord Bishop of Oxford for Representing this New Sacerdotal Absolution as *Popish*, that, in Truth, it is the Highest Pitch of Popery, and such as several of their Divines would never have risen up to, had not the Crafty Managers of the Papal Interest in that Council obliged them to it by Anathema's.

The late Learned Bishop *Stillington*, in his Enquiry how far the Canons of that Council were agreeable to *Catholick Tradition*, has given us a good Account of this Matter ; (*Council of Trent examin'd*, p. 88.) which I hope it will not be improper for the Reader to have some of.

“ As to the Form of this Sacrament [viz. of Penance] the Council of Trent denounces an Anathema against those who affirm Absolution to be only Declarative of the Remission of Sins : And yet I shall prove, saith he, that this was the more current Doctrine even of the Church of Rome, up to the Master of the Sentences.

“ *Gabriel Biel* saith, the Ancient Doctors did commonly follow it ; and to *Scotus's* Arguments against it, he answers, That true Contrition obtains Pardon with God before Sacerdotal Absolution, but not with the Church ; which, as the Bishop well observes, will never hold to make Absolution to confer the Grace of Remission, if the Sin be really forgiven before.

Marfilinus saith, “ that God forgives Sin upon Contrition Authoritatively ; the Priest's Absolution is Ministerial in the Court of Conscience and before the Church. And those Sins which God first Absolves from Privately and Authentically, the Priest afterwards Absolves from in Right of the Church as its Minister.

Tostatus

Tostatus saith, " that the Priest's Absolution follows God's.

Ockam, " that the Priests then bind and loose, when they shew Men to be Bound and Loosed.

Gulielmus Antissiodore, " that Contrition takes away the Guilt and Punishment of Sin, as to God and Conscience, but not as to the Church; for a Man is still bound to undergo the Penance which the Church enjoyns him.

Bonaventure, " that Absolution presupposes Grace, for no Priest would Absolve one whom he did not presume that God had Absolved before.

Alexander Hales, " that where God doth not begin in Absolution, the Priest cannot make it up.

" But the Master of the Sentences Himself most fully handles this Point; and he shews from the Fathers, that God alone can Remit Sin, both as to the Fault, and the Punishment due to it; and the Power of the Keys, he saith, is like the Priest's Judgment about Leprosy in the Levitical Law. God heal'd the Person, and the Priest declared him healed. Or as our Saviour first Raised Lazarus, then gave him to his Disciples to be Loosed. He is Loosed before God, but not in the Face of the Church, but by the Priest's Judgment. Another way, saith he, Priests bind by enjoining Penance, and they loose by Remitting it; or Re-admitting Persons to Communion upon Performing it.

This, that very Learned Bishop tells us, was the current Doctrine even of the Church of Rome, almost to the Council of Trent. It was chiefly opposed by *Aquinas* and *Scotus*, and carried in that Council by the Sway of the Franciscans and Dominicans. So that it was the very Height of Popery establish'd in that Corrupt Council, that the Priest's Verbal Absolution is Necessary to the Pardon of Sin, and that which gives Efficacy to Repentance. The Generality of the Church of Rome before that time, were con-

contented with a Lower Pitch of the Sacerdotal Powers, and did maintain, 1. That the Sin was and ought to be Forgiven with God, before the Priest's Absolution be Pronounced. 2. That the Priest's Absolution was not *Judicial*, or an *Efficient Cause* of the Sinner's Pardon, but only *Declaratory* of his Case, that God had Pardoned him. 3. And that this was chiefly insisted on and necessary as an Act of Ecclesiastical Discipline: *He Absolves in Right of the Church as its Minister: He is before Loosed before God, without it; but not in the Face of the Church, but by the Priest's Judgment.*

Why then should those Men, who Maintain the Priest's Verbal, Judicial Absolution, for that is the Doctrine in Question, to be *Ordinarily Necessary* to the Forgiveness of Sins, and to *bring the Pardon from God, &c.* be offended that the World should cry out against this as *Popish*, when it's what even Popery itself while it had any Modesty, would not pretend to?

Dr. Hammond, as we have seen already, thought otherwise. And in his View of the Directory (p. 370.) he calls *the Power of the Keys* the *Power of the Church in Pronouncing God's Pardon, and actually giving the Pardon and Peace of the Church, as a Necessary Expression of Christian Charity in every Church to its Poor Members, &c.* Dr. B. says (Serm. p. 11, 20.) that the *Sinner cannot be Released until the Priest has Released him, and when they judge it necessary God confirms it.* But others tell us, that the Sacerdotal Absolution chiefly respects the Church, where Scandal or Offence has been committed against the Brethren, and that *the Peace of the Church always supposed Peace with God to be made first.* (Vid. Not. in Cypr. de Lap. And the Church of Rome it self, as we have seen was once of that Opinion.

Archbishop Usher, from the Romish Doctors, shews the Power of the Keys to be by way of Intercession only and Deprecation, not by imparting any immediate Absolution. (P. 126.)

He says that the Ministers are by their Function appointed to be ~~Witnesses~~, rather than Conferrers of that Grace. (Answ. to Jesuits Challenge, p. 142.) And to their Power of Absolving by the Ministry of the Word, he applies the Words of Optatus about Baptism, (p. 141.) Not the Minister, but the Faith of the Believer, and the Trinity, do bring these things unto Men. (P. 143.) he appeals to the Authority of St. Jerome, and of Peter Lombard from him, to prove the Sacramental Absolution to be only Declarative, like that of the Jewish Priests in the 13th of Leviticus, (Levit. 13. 44.) Where the Laws are set down that concern the Leprosy, (which was a Type of the Pollution of Sin,) we meet often with these Expressions, The Priests shall Cleanse him, and the Priest shall Pollute him: Not that he is the Author of his Pollution, but that he Declared him to be Polluted, which before to Many did seem to have been clean. So the Priests forgive Sins while they Shew, or Declare, that they are forgiven by God.

And having before given the very Sense of Alexander Hales, and Bonaventure, and the Master of the Sentences, as they have been cited above by Bishop Stillingfleet, he adds (p. 132.) And this loosing of Men by the Judgment of the Priest, is by the Fathers generally accounted nothing else, but a Restoring them to the Peace of the Church, and Admitting them to the Lord's Table again — Neither do I find that they did ever use any such formal Absolution as this, I Absolve thee from thy Sins, wherein our Popish Priests do place the very Form of their late devised Sacrament of Penance.

Would it not be tedious to the Reader as well as to my self, I could produce several Passages out of

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Mr.

Mr. Hooker's 6th Book to this purpose. But I will rather recommend to him the Reading that whole Chapter which is about Absolution, in which he will find a great many Things on this Subject very Judicious and very Instructive.

4. Another Objection against Dr. B's and Mr. L's Sacerdotal Absolution, is the making it strictly *Judicial*; which is as ridiculous an Absurdity, and as vile a Banter on Christianity as any I ever met with.

There needs no more to prove the Truth and Justice of this Charge, than to state fairly the true Notion of a *Judicial Absolution*, as Maintained by these Men in opposition to a *Declarative* one.

If they meant no more by *Judicial* than a Declaration of the Judgment of the Church as to Outward and Visible Communion, we should make no great Scruples about it: But this will not do, Dr. B. declares (*Serm. p. 34, 37.*) that upon the Absolution of the Priest, the Sinner has his Pardon *actually sealed in Heaven*, whose Repentance without that would signify nothing. So that by Virtue of the *Authoritative Sentence* of the Priest, he is as *sure of a Pardon, as if an Angel brought it him from Heaven*. Dr. Heylin, who was also a zealous Stickler in all these Points, speaks of a Declarative Absolution as insufficient, and tells us, that the *Priest's Power in the Remission of Sins is like that of a Judge under Sovereign Princes, who by the Power committed to them, do actually Absolve the Party which is brought before them, if on good Ground they find him Innocent of the Crimes he stands accused of, and so Discharge him of his Irons*. So that if there be any thing in the Force of the Allusion here made to the Authority of a Judge, the very Nature of a *Judicial Sentence* is, that it is not as to the Success of it Conditional and Uncertain;

tain ; But absolutely and actually certain upon the Sentence and by the Authority of the Judge. For as Dr. Taylor, (Duct. Dub. p. 587.) has well observed, *The Error of the Judge does not make the Sentence invalid ; but his Authority prevails above his Error :* So that *Right or Wrong, if a Man be condemned he shall die for it.* Whereas the declarative Absolution is only pronouncing the Judgment of the Church by its Ministers, according to the outward Appearance of the Case. And this made Mr. Hooker to say, (p. 170.) that the Use of Power over *voluntary Converts* to bind and loose, will not permit that it should signify any other, than to pronounce of Sinners according to that which may be gathered by outward Signs ; because really to effect the Removal of Sin from the Soul is no Priestly Act, but a Work that far exceedeth their Ability. So that from these Accounts of the Sentiments of Men on either Side, the true Difference between a declarative and judicial Absolution seems to be this : The Declarative is only pronouncing the Priest's Judgment of the Case, as far as it is to be gather'd by outward Signs ; but it leaves the Success of it with God to depend on the Sincerity of the Penitent, and on the Truth of his Repentance. Whereas the Judicial, though it requires Repentance also, yet it makes the Priest the Judge of it, and upon his Judgment it brings a certain actual Pardon not to be reversed in Heaven. If it does not import thus much, it is very improperly and absurdly called Judicial, with Respect to God.

Now it seems to me that the asserting such a Power to any Priest, with less than miraculous Endowments, is ridiculously absurd. Because it is making him a Peremptory, and as it were a Final Judge, of that which without a Capacity of searching Men's Hearts, no Priest can be ascertained of. And consequently it is giving him a Power of Pronouncing

cing a *certain actual Pardon* to Sinners , by his own Personal Sentence and Judgment, when in the very Nature of Things he can pronounce with respect to God only a *conditional One*. There are very few Instances in which a Priest can say Absolutely and Peremptorily , and with full Certainty , *Thy Sins are forgiven thee*. Or, *I do by God's Authority actually discharge thee , and thou art actually discharged in Heaven*. He can never truly say this, unless he can be sure that the Sinner's Repentance is sincere. And how can he be sure of this , who knows not the Heart of Man ? If he leaves the Success of the Absolution to depend on the Penitent's Sincerity, how can he then tell him that he is *actually forgiven*. For it may be his Absolution is good for nothing. It is good for nothing if the Penitent be not sincere. And where then is the *Assurance*, or *Benefit*, or *Comfort* of it ? To pronounce therefore that to be *certain , actual , and peremptory* by Virtue of the *Authoritative Sentence* of the Priest , which in it self is *Conditional* , and with respect to all but God is *Uncertain* ; is an Absurdity that I would not have Disputants in Christian Divinity to fall into. It was this that inclined Archbishop Tillotson , (Vol. XII. Sermon. 12.) to think the *Power of the Keys*, or of *remitting and retaining Sins*, to be an Extraordinary Power given to the Apostles , and to belong to and depend on the miraculous Gift of *discerning of Spirits*, or *knowing the Secrets of Men's Hearts*. They who had this Privilege might do this upon certain Grounds, and were secured from Mistake in the Exercise of their Power upon particular Persons : Which the Priests and Ministers of the Church now are not, nor can be, because they cannot see into Men's Hearts, whether they be truly Penitent and qualified for Forgiveness or no. Dr. Brett, (Vindicat. p. 8, 9.) thinks it a sufficient Reply to all this, to observe that the Apostles Power of

Binding

Binding and Loosing was not founded on their extraordinary and miraculous Gifts, but on their ordinary Authority, which was to continue with their Successors for ever. And if he would contend for no greater Power of Absolution than what is exercised by admitting into the Communion of the Church, and releasing of Church Censures, and such Acts of visible Discipline alone, we could very easily agree with him. But if he will carry this Power so high as to include the *actual Efficacy* of the *Judicial Sentence of the Priest* to *ascertain an instantaneous Pardon* with God, that shall never be revers'd or repealed in Heaven; it does necessarily require such a Miraculous Gift, and can never be safely rely'd on without it. For let us consider,

1. If the Penitent should not be sincere and duly qualified for Forgiveness according to the Laws of the Gospel, will the mistaken Absolution of the Priest discharge him? I promise my self that they will answer, No. 2. Does not then the Success of the Absolution depend very much on the Sinners being truly Penitent? I hope they will answer, Yes. 3. Have the Christian Priests then any way of attaining to a certain Knowledge of Sinners Hearts how far they are truly Penitent? It cannot be pretended that they have. Wherefore, 4. Lastly, Is it not then ridiculous, to say no worse, to claim under Christ a Power of passing such a *certain Judgment* upon the Sinners Case as shall be *actually binding in Heaven*, and without any Danger of Repeal: When its plain that we have no manner of *Capacity* for such a *Certainty* of Judgment, or for an Absolution so entirely to be depended on? Have there not been ten thousand times ten thousand Absolutions given, that are no better than dangerous and fatal Delusions? What in God's Name is then the Power that we plead for? A Power only to abuse

and by Delusions to destroy our Christian Brethren? This is the Case wherever the want of true Repentance in the Sinner, or Ignorance or Corruption in the Priest, leads to a mistaken Absolution. Let the Church of *Rome* then, who mean all this by a Judicial Absolution, plead for it. But let not those who are offended to be thought well affected to the *Corruptions of Popery*, plead for a Power that is so truly *Popery*, and none of the least of its *Corruptions*. Let us not be zealous in contending for a superior Degree of Power, that Christ has given us no Capacity for. The Protestants Absolution is more modest and reasonable; it's only a Declaration of the Priest's Judgment upon the Case, that has indeed its Effect where the Sinner is truly Penitent, but gives no Manner of Comfort, but what must depend on the Assurance of that: Therefore says *Bish. Taylor*, in the Page above-cited, the Use of the Keys does differ from proper Jurisdiction in this great Thing, that if the Keys be rightly used they do Bind or Loose respectively; but if they err, they do nothing upon the Subject, they neither Bind nor Loose — the Church gives nothing but the Sentence of God, and tells upon what Terms God will or will not pardon. — So that if the Priest is deceived, he is deceived for himself, and for nobody else; he alters nothing of the State of the Soul by his quick Absolution. And then he recites *St. Jerom's* Allusion of the Levitical Priests cleansing the Leper, only by declaring him clean; and those other Words of his, that God respects the Life of the Penitent, not the Sentence of the Priest. *Dr. Hammond* (p. 449.) also, upon that Question, whether Absolution in the Church be only Declarative, expresses himself thus; For the Church's Absolution being not the actual, eternal Pardon of Sins in Heaven, (which is left to be God's Work, who justifieth Sinners, except by way of Consequence upon this Promise of God's) but Absolution being peculiarly the freeing the Peni-

Penitent from Ecclesiastical Censures here below — it is the Peace, or Favour, or Pardon of the Church peculiarly, but not God's Peace, or Pardon, or Favour directly. It is Judicial with Respect to the Authority and Communion of the Church ; but with God it can but be Conditional. Oh , but says Mr. L. it must be more than merely Declarative , Whose soever Sins ye remit ; this is the Apostles Act , and really conveys the Pardon pronounced. But let him prove first that the Priest's Sentence conveys a Pardon, where the Sinner is not truly Penitent. Or let him prove if he can, that where the Christian Sinner is truly Penitent, his Sin cannot be forgiven, until the Priest pronounces his Sentence of Absolution, and when he has done this I will be silent.

But I doubt not they will here appeal to the Offices and Absolutions of our Church, and think to have mighty Supports from them. These are three :
 1. One in the daily Morning and Evening Prayer, which is commonly called *Declarative*. 2. Another in the Communion Office, which is commonly said to be *Precatory*. 3. That in the Visitation of the Sick, which the Lord Bishop of Oxford owns to be more *Particular* and *Judicial*. Concerning all which I have an Observation or two to make, *viz.*

1. That every one of them , according to what has been said already, is so far *Conditional* as to the *Efficacy* thereof , that they all expressly declare the Validity of the Absolution to depend on the Repentance of the Sinner. In the daily Prayer it is, *He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly Repent, and unfeignedly believe his Holy Gospel.* And this is therefore justly call'd *Declarative* , because in the very Form of it it only *Declareth* and *Pronounceth* God's Sentence, setting forth by Christ's Command and Authority, that all true Believers and sincere

Penitents shall be forgiven. So also in the Communion Service, *Almighty God --- of his great Mercy hath promised Forgiveness of Sins to all them that with hearty Repentance and truth Faith turn unto him.* For such the Church by the Priest prays for Pardon, and has a certain Promise that they shall obtain it. But without these, neither has God promised nor the Priest obtained Power to pronounce Absolution. Nay, even that third Form which is said to be more Absolute and *Judicial*, runs, as the rest, wholly on the Conditions of true Repentance and Faith. *Our Lord Jesus Christ who hath left Power to his Church to absolve all Sinners who truly Repent and Believe in him.* If the Sinner does not truly Repent and Believe, the Church has no Power to absolve. Now as this is apparently the Ground upon which the Church proceeds in all its Absolutions, they must all of them in the Nature of Things be but Conditional, as God's own Promises are : In that without this good Disposition in the Penitent, the Absolution is certainly void and of no Force. But,

2. It must be observed again, that in this third and more *Judicial* Form of absolving, the Minister is so far from having any Countenance to rely on his own delegated Authority and Power, that he prays to God to forgive him before he in Christ's Name absolves him. *Our Lord Jesus Christ --- of his great Mercy forgive thee thine Offences. And by his Authority committed to me, I absolve thee, &c.*

3. Nay, after this Authoritative Absolution pronounced, to shew that the Efficacy of it may still fail for want of the true Disposition of the Penitent, the Minister is directed to pray for Mercy to the Sinner before absolved, that *God would consider his Contrition, accept his Tears, and not impute unto him his former Sins.* This is the Purport of that Prayer which the Church directs to be said after the Absolution

lution of the Sick. Now what is the Construction to be made of all this? Or how does this agree with the Notion of a Judicial Sentence? Yes, it does thus far, as it shews that the most *Judicial Absolution* which the Church can give, is yet but *Conditional* with respect to the Sinner. Not through any want of Power or Commission in the Ministry, but only as all that Power and Authority must be regulated and limited by the general Conditions of the Gospel. Which whether the absolved Penitent has or has not performed, the Priest who absolves him cannot tell. Which plainly shews how ridiculously absurd it is for any Priest to pretend to give such a Judicial Absolution to any, as shall raise the Efficacy and Success of it above being Conditional: That is, in other Words, above being what all the Gospel Ministrations were intended to be, governed and restrained in all their Efficacy, by the general Conditions of God's Promises, without which every Christian may be sure that the Absolution is of no Force. This made our great Divines, such as Dr. *Hammond*, to esteem the Absolution *Judicial* with respect to the Judgment and visible Communion of the Church, *whose Pardon and Peace it actually gives*; but *Conditional* with respect to God, with whom the Success and Efficacy of it depend wholly on the Sinners true Faith and Repentance. And accordingly, when the Homily of Common Prayer and Sacraments says, that *Absolution hath the Promise of Forgiveness of Sins*, it must be understood as the same Promise is made to the Sacraments, and all other Christian Ministrations, (*i. e.*) when they are administred to Penitent and Faithful Christians. He has no more Authority in Absolving, than he has in Baptizing, or in giving the Communion, to seal the Promises of God to them that believe and repent. And Absolution

lution can no more convey a Pardon by the mere Judicial Sentence of the Priest, than the Sacraments can become effectual to Grace, merely *ex opere operato*. But while I speak thus of Absolution, and the Priests Power in it, by Allusion to the Administration of Sacraments, I must desire the Reader to remember, that although the Sacraments are appointed Means of Grace, and ordinarily necessary to the Attainment of it, yet Absolution by a verbal Sentence of the Priest is not so; but as I have shewed at large above under the second Head, at most but a Means of Consolation and Encouragement to repenting Sinners. And whereas Dr. B. expostulates, and with some seeming Wonder, (Serm. Vind. p. 13.) *why a greater Capacity is required, and a greater Gift of discerning of Spirits necessary for pronouncing to a Penitent Absolution, than for Remission of Sins by the Ministration of the Sacraments* I answer, because an Absolution strictly and properly *Judicial*, has more and greater Efficacy ascribed to it by the Defenders of it, than what the Protestants do ascribe to either of the Sacraments. The Efficacy of the Sacraments is always allowed to be Conditional; whereas the Success of a Judicial Absolution is not. But say Dr. B. and Mr. L. (Serm. p. 51. 54. Bish. Ox. Ch. Conf. §. 19, 20, 21, 22.) *Do not the Priests act as God's Ministers?* Is it not called *the Absolution*? --- And to be pronounced by the Priest alone? -- And he *standing*, to shew his Authority? And why is *Christ's Commission* recited in the *Preface* of it? These Things, and the proper Signification of the Word *Pronunciare*, shews the Absolution to be *more than Declarative*, and must *actually convey the Pardon*. To these and all other such like weak and trifling Expostulations the Answer is obvious and easy. The Christian Priests do act as the Ministers of God, and the Absolution which they Pronounce is the Church's Absolution Judicially, and God's

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Conditionally, pronounced by the Authority both of Christ and his Church. But then as to the Efficacy and Success of the Sentence, That can extend no farther than the Bounds and Contents of their Commission. And I would desire the Wifest of all these Gentlemen, if they can, to prove to me, that God and Christ have given to the Christian Ministers any other Power or Authority in Absolution than a Conditional one. And when these Gentlemen have said all they can, no Sacerdotal Absolution can now be Pronounced, but what must be as Conditional as the General Promises of God are. But, says Mr. L. (Page 36.) *if the Priest do's not Bring and Apply God's Pardon to the Penitent, when he Pronounces the Absolution ; then it must follow, that God do's not at that Present time Pardon and Absolve, which is directly contrary to the very Letter of the Words, He Pardoneth and Absolveth ; and so the Church is made to lay an Injunction upon the Priest to Pronounce a Lye every time he reads the Absolution.* The Poor Church of England has, I find, a hard Time of it, to extricate her self out of all the Snares in which this Petulant Writer would entangle her. If he will not allow the Efficacy and Success of the Church's Absolution to be Conditional, the Priest may be in great Danger of *Pronouncing a Lye every time he reads the Absolution,* which can be of no Force but on the Conditions of Faith and Repentance. But if he will allow the Success of the Absolution to depend on the Sincerity of the Penitent, and this Previous Good Disposition to go before the Absolution ; then it is so far from being *a Lye, that God pardoneth such ;* that upon their Sincere Faith and Repentance, He had actually Pardoned them before the Sentence of Absolution was pronounced. This, I know, is what Mr. L. do's not like, that the Penitent Sinner should be Pardoned before the Priest has Absolved him.

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But if he or Dr. B. have such a mighty Zeal as to ascribe God's actual Pardon of the Sinner rather to the Sentence of the Priest, than to the Repentance of the Sinner, I have no Inclination to concur with him in putting a Popish Construction on a Protestant Absolution.

In short, whoever will impartially view the Offices and Rubricks, &c. of our Church, will plainly see that it never intended such a Judicial, Peremptory and Unconditional Absolution, by the mere Sentence of the Priest, as Mr. L. and Dr. B. contend for. Dr. B. says (*Vindic. p. 46, 47. Append. p. 102.*) that *there is no Material Difference in the three Forms of Absolution, and that it matters not in what Form the Priests Pronounce it, because the Pardon depends not on the Form, but on the Authority vested in the Priest by his Commission.* To which I must Reply, That when a greater Degree or Measure of Power are claimed to be exercised by one Form than by another, his Rule is not good; for then the Difference of the Form is very Material, and of great Moment. This has made the Church of Rome contend for the *Indicative Form*, as carrying greater Power and Authority than the *Declarative*. And thus a Form may carry greater Power than the Commission was intended to convey. But if Dr. B. intended that there is no Material Difference in our Three Forms of Absolving, that is thus far true:

1. That, as I have shewed above, they were all of them designed to be *Conditional* only, in their Success as to the Sinner Absolved: To assure him Effectually in God's Name, and by his Authority, of the Pardon of his Sins if he be heartily Penitent, but otherwise to have no Force at all.

2. To be used rather as Means of Comfort, than as *Ordinarily Necessary* to his Pardon. Even that more Particular and Judicial Form in the Office of

the Visitation of the Sick, it is very Evident from the Rubrick, that it was particularly Calculated for those who esteemed this the properest Method of Quieting their Afflicted Consciences. If the Person *feels his Conscience to be troubled with any weighty Matter*, and attests the Reality of his Trouble by a *Special Confession of those his Sins*, and then for his Comfort *humbly and heartily Desires it*, then the Priest shall Absolve him in that manner. Those Words of the Rubrick plainly shew that the Church had Regard, not only to the Penitents Qualifications, as Mr. L. expresses it, (*Bp. Ox. Ch. Confid. p. 42.*) but more especially to the Trouble of his Conscience, and his Heartly Desire of it, without which it is not directed to be used. Without this, the Matter is left to be transacted between God and his own Conscience, as Dr. Hammond says, and without opening his Case to the Minister, and consequently without Absolution.

That this is the true Sense and Judgment of the Church of England as to this Matter, is further plain from what is deliver'd in the Second Part of the Homily of Repentance. Where treating of the Four Parts of that Duty, it makes this *Confession of Sins* the Second Part; and having shewed the Absolute Necessity of such Confession to God, it speaks of the Confession to Men, and of the Necessity of it, in these Words:

“ Indeed, besides this, there is another Kind of Confession, which is Needful and Necessary. And of the same doth St. James speak after this manner; saying, Acknowledge your Faults one to another, and Pray one for another, that ye may be Saved. As if he should say, Open that which grieveth you, that a Remedy may be found. And this is commanded both for him that complaineth, and for him that heareth, that
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“ the one should shew his Grief to the other. The
 “ true Meaning is, that the Faithful ought to ac-
 “ knowledge their Offences, whereby some Ha-
 “ tred, Rancour, Ground, or Malice, having risen
 “ or grown among them one to another, that a
 “ Brotherly Reconciliation may be had ; without
 “ which, nothing that we do can be acceptable
 “ to God.

“ And whereas the Adversaries go about to
 “ wrest this Place for to maintain their Auricular
 “ Confession withal ; they are greatly deceived
 “ themselves, and do shamefully deceive others.
 “ For if this Text ought to be understood of Au-
 “ ricular Confession, then the Priests are as much
 “ bound to confess themselves to the Lay-people,
 “ as the Lay-people are bound to confess them-
 “ selves to them. And if to Pray is to Absolve,
 “ then the Laity by this Place hath as great Au-
 “ thority to Absolve the Priests, as the Priests have
 “ to Absolve the Laity. This did *Johannes Scotus*,
 “ otherwise called *Duns*, well perceive ; who,
 “ upon this Place, writeth on this Manner :
 “ Neither doth it seem to me that *James* did give
 “ this Commandment, or that he did set it forth
 “ as received of Christ. For first and foremost,
 “ Whence had he Authority to bind the whole
 “ Church, sith that he was only Bishop of the
 “ Church of *Jerusalem* ? Except thou wilt say,
 “ that the same Church was at the Beginning the
 “ Head Church, and consequently that he was
 “ the Head Bishop ; which Thing the See of *Rome*
 “ will never grant. The understanding of it then
 “ is as in these Words, Confess your Sins one to
 “ another : A Perswasion to Humility, whereby
 “ he willeth us to confess our selves generally un-
 “ to our Neighbours that we are Sinners, accord-
 “ ing to that Saying, If we say we have no Sin, we
 deceive

" deceive our selves, and the Truth is not in us.
 " And where that they do alledge this Saying of
 " our Saviour Jesus Christ unto the Leper, to prove
 " Auricular Confession to stand on God's Word,
 " Go thy way, and shew thy self unto the Priest :
 " Do they not see that the Leper was cleansed
 " from his Leprosy, before he was by Christ sent
 " unto the Priest to shew himself unto him. By
 " the same Reason we must be cleansed from our
 " Spiritual Leprosy ; I mean, our Sins must be
 " Forgiven us, before that we come to Confession :"
 And consequently, before we receive Absolution.
 " What need we then to tell forth our Sins into
 " the Ear of the Priest, sith that they be already
 " taken away ?" Consequently then Sacerdotal
 Absolution do's neither Convey the Pardon, nor
 is Necessary thereto. Therefore St. *Ambrose* in his
 2d Sermon on the 119th *Psalm* doth say full well,
 " Go shew thy self unto the Priest : Who is the
 " true Priest, but he which is the Priest for ever
 " after the Order of *Melchisedech* ? Whereby this
 " Holy Father doth understand, that both the
 " Priesthood and the Law being changed, we
 " ought to acknowledge no other ; none other
 " Priest for Deliverance from our Sins, but our
 " Saviour Jesus Christ ; who being Sovereign Bi-
 " shop, doth with the Sacrifice of his Body and
 " Blood, offered once for ever upon the Altar of
 " the Cross, most effectually cleanse the Spiritual
 " Leprosy, and wash away the Sins of all those
 " that with true Confession of the same do flee
 " unto him. It is most evident and plain that this
 " Auricular Confession hath not the Warrant of
 " God's Word, else it had not been lawful for
 " *Nectarius*, Bishop of *Constantinople*, upon a just Oc-
 " casion to have put it down. For when any thing
 " Ordained of God is by the Lewdness of Men
 " abused,

“ abused, the Abuse ought to be taken away, and
 “ the Thing it self suffered to remain. Moreover,
 “ these are St. *Augustine's* Words; *What have I to do*
 “ *wish Men, that they should hear my Confession, as tho'*
 “ *they were able to heal my Diseases? A curious Sort of*
 “ *Men to know another Man's Life, and Slothfully to*
 “ *Correct and Amend their own. Why do they seek to*
 “ *hear of me what I am, which will not hear of thee what*
 “ *they are? And how can they tell when they hear of*
 “ *me by my self, whether I tell the Truth or not, sith no*
 “ *Mortal Man knoweth what is in Man, but the Spirit*
 “ *of Man which is in him? Augustine would not have*
 “ *written thus, if Auricular Confession had been*
 “ *used in his time. Being therefore not led with*
 “ *the Conscience thereof, let us with Fear and*
 “ *Trembling, and with a true contrite Heart use*
 “ *that kind of Confession that God doth command*
 “ *in his Word; and then doubtless as he is Faith-*
 “ *ful and Righteous, he will forgive us our Sins,*
 “ *and make us clean from all Wickedness. I do*
 “ *not say but that if any do find themselves trou-*
 “ *bled in Conscience, they may repair to their*
 “ *Learned Curate or Pastor, or to some other God-*
 “ *ly Learned Man, and shew the Trouble and*
 “ *Doubt of their Conscience to them, that they*
 “ *may receive at their Hand the Comfortable Salve*
 “ *of God's Word; but it is against the True Chri-*
 “ *stian Liberty that any Man should be bound to*
 “ *the Numbering of his Sins, as it hath been used*
 “ *heretofore in the Time of Blindness and Igno-*
 “ *rance.”* If Mr. L. would but learn the Sense
 and Judgment of the Church of *England* from this
 Homily, he would soon perceive, that the Absoluti-
 ons of our Church are designed for the Comfort of
 Afflicted Consciences, but not imposed or directed
 as Necessary Means of Forgiveness of Sin.

5. This brings me to the Last Thing that I have to speak to, *viz.* The Usefulness of this Sacerdotal Power, and its great Serviceableness to Religion. I have too much Interest in the Priesthood to take any Pleasure in Debasing it; but I have also too much Interest in Religion to have any Inclination either to Advance or to Diminish the Christian Priesthood to the Prejudice of that. I would no more Advance it to the Detriment of Religion, because I my self am a Minister, than I would Countenance Men in Idolatry, because I was to be the Idol whom they would Adore.

Mr. L. says, that *the want of having our State more frequently tried*, he means in order to such Absolution, by such Spiritual Judges as these whom our Lord Jesus Christ has set over us, is undoubtedly one great Cause of that Universal Presumption in God's Mercy, tho' we live in Impenitency, which now too much prevails in the World, &c. The want of more frequent Trial of our own State must, no doubt, be one great Cause of Men's Presumption. And with a great many, the not Advising with, and Consulting their Spiritual Guides as to the State of their Souls, and the Reasonableness of their Expectations, may contribute much thereto. And it would be to the Advantage of Christians; and to the Increase of Religion among us, if they would be prevailed on more frequently to Try and Examine themselves; and would more freely than they do, Advise with and Consult their Ministers. There is, without all Contradiction, great Benefit in the Counsel and Assistance of Wise, and Good, and Faithful Ministers. But what is this to the *Judicial* Power of a mere Verbal Absolution? May not a Wise and Prudent Minister Examine and Reprove; and Instruct and Comfort his Flock, without taking upon him to Pronounce their Peremptory Sentence.

of Damnation or Salvation ? Or if they had such a Power, what Security is there against the People's falling into Presumption under the Exercise of it ?

Look into that Part of the Christian World where the Belief of such a Power of *Judicial Absolution* prevails, and see whether there are not as Visible Appearances of an Universal Presumption in God's Mercy there, as any that now prevail among the Protestants who disown that Power. How many Thousands, and Hundreds of Thousands of Absolutions have been so given, that, if a Penitent and Sanctified Heart be the Indispensable Condition of Salvation, could never Profit the Sinners that were Absolved ? What must we think of the Persons who are openly known to live in Habitual Fornication and Adultery, and to indulge themselves in all Sensuality and Uncleaness ; and yet upon a Particular, Ridiculous Sort of Confession, receive a New Absolution every Week ; and so run on in a continual Practice of Sinning and Confessing, of Whoring, and of Receiving a Weekly Absolution for it ; and yet are taught all this while to believe their Sins as effectually forgiven, as if an *Angel from Heaven* brought them the Intelligence ? They have no Notion of *Clave errante non valet Absolutio* ; but believing the *Judgment* of the Church and of its Priests to be Good, they depend on the *Efficacy* of the Absolution. And do's not this Minister to an Universal and Fatal Presumption in God's Mercy ? Yes, the Natural Tendency of this Doctrine, and of this Practice to destroy all the true Efficacy of Religion among Men, is, I think, one of the most Dangerous and Infamous of all the Corruptions of Popery. What can be more Detestable and Vile than the *Practice of the Abbot, who Absolved the Monk that Poisoned King John, and of the*

Priest

Priest who, about 130 Years ago, Absolved before-hand that Desperate and Devilish Spaniard Jaureguy, for the Murther that he Purposed to have committed on the Noble Prince of Orange? (Walter Travers, Answer to the Catholick's Petition, p. 167, 284.) And we cannot doubt but that the same Doctrine will often introduce the same Evil Practices in other Churches as well as in that of *Rome*. We may recollect what a Flagrant Instance we have had of this within our own Memory. Do we not all remember how Two Traytors, who had barbarously and wickedly Conspired to Rebel against, and One of them, even by an Assassination, to have Murder'd the late King *William*, (*Friend and Parkins*, 1696.) who had, under God, so gloriously deliver'd us from Popery and Slavery, who, when they were Sentenc'd to die for the same, and were just on the Point of Execution, were openly Absolved, in the Form of our Church, as tho' it had been with her Approbation and Authority, by Three Clergymen, who called themselves of the Church of *England*; and who by that Absolution sent the Traytors out of the World with an Opinion of the Certainty of their Salvation, although they gave no Evidence of their Repentance for that Horrible Crime for which they were then to die, nor humbly desired such Absolution? The infamous Practice gave such Universal Scandal, that it obliged 14 Bishops, being all that were then in or about *London*, to make a Publick Declaration of their Dislike and Abhorrence of it; to take off the Scandal which so vile a Practice would otherwise have brought, not only on our Church and Clergy, but even on our Holy Religion. How then does such a Power as this guard Men against the Danger of Presumptuous and Unreasonable Expectations of God's Mercy? I am verily perswa-

ded that it rather leads Men into such, and seduces them into delusive and deceitful Hopes.

If therefore the Promoting and Advancing true Religion be what Men have indeed at Heart, let them bring the Power of Absolution into its Ancient and Primitive Channel, by the Publick Service and Communion of the Church, by the Application of God's Word for their Comfort, and the Administration of the Holy Sacrament as the most Effectual Means of Grace. Let them be taught to look for the Pardon of their Sins, more especially by their closer Communion with God and Christ in the Holy Supper. And let them at the same time be taught, that no Sacraments, no Absolution can avail them without a True Repentance, a Pure Heart, and a Holy Life. Then will they see the Danger of Sin, and the Necessity of Holiness, and learn to Proportion their Expectations to the Evidences which they find in themselves of a truly Penitent Heart, and Universal Amendment of Life ; And not on any pretended *Judicial Sentence* of the Minister alone, which perhaps God neither Approves here on Earth, nor will hereafter Confirm in Heaven.

IV. **T**HE last Exception to the Lord Bishop of Oxford's Charge, respects the *Validity of Baptism* administred by *Lay-men*; which I have considered already in a little Treatise lately Published, (*State and Importance, &c.*) In which, altho' written rather by way of Apology than Controversy, I have shewn Mr. L. that his Definition of Essentials is not just, nor his Reasonings from it agreeable to the Sense and Practice of the Church of England. But these Things he looks on with his usual Air of Haughtiness and Disdain. He is too great a Champion to be bound down by such mean Things as Definitions, tho' of his own making. If he takes his Pen in Hand, the greatest and the brightest Characters fall before him, and dwindle into nothing. *Whitgift, Hooker, Bilson*, whose Names have been so glorious for a Hundred and fifty Years past, as having with the greatest Learning and Judgment defended the Church of England against Pu-
ritans,

ritans, in Comparison with this great Master, are of no Esteem. Archbishop *Whitgift* writes *Inconsistent Sayings*; (*Bish. Oxf. Ch. Conf.* p. 68, 69, 2.) Bishop *Bilson*, *Supposed Rules*; *Hooker*, *Affertions without Proof*; Bishop *Cousins*, *Presbyterian Notions of Ordination*; Archbishop *Abbot*, *Ipse Dixit*. Some Bishops explain away the Sense of the Church of England; and others depart from the Rules of it. And in any 'tis Blemish enough to oppose the Profound, the Judicious Mr. L. who appears from the Clouds like a blazing Star, to illuminate and guide the poor deluded Clergy of the Church of England, into a better Knowledge of her Doctrines and Sentiments, than their Forefathers had. And why then should I, in my poor Station and Capacity, expect to escape his Contempt and Scorn? But generous Minds are not without Condescension; and therefore who knows but that this mighty Master may at last stoop so low as to Think and Consider? If he will, he will find in that little Tract, three or four Things in Reference to the Judgment of the Church of England, that he has as yet given no pertinent Reply to, altho' they have been offered more than once.

1. He will there find what he cannot deny, *viz.* That the Asserting the Ministers Authority to be Essential to the Sacrament of Baptism, was the peculiar Principle of the Puritans, defended by *T. Cartwright*, and vigorously opposed by the greatest Men of our Church, (p. 4. 31.)

2. That the Rubrics and Practice of our Church were such before the Reign of *K. James I.* as no Church could admit of, which look'd on the Ministers Authority as Essential, (p. 21.)

3. That when the Rubric was altered in the beginning of that Reign, and a lawful Minister required to baptize; it was only altering the Discipline, without changing the Doctrine of our Church. This I have proved undeniably from hence, (p. 22.) That both *K. James* and the Bishops who made that Alteration did all of them so far allow the Validity of Lay-Baptism, altho' it was Irregular, as not to require Persons so Baptized to be Baptized again, but all of them expressly declared the contrary. And as I cannot but think this to be a Remark of great Moment to a right Understanding of the true Import of that Change, so I particularly expostulate with Dr. B. and Mr. L. the Unreasonableness of putting such a Construction on the Rubrics of the Church, as is directly contrary to the avowed Opinions of those who made or regulated them, (p. 23.) And if ever they think fit to reply to these Considerations, I now once more recommend it to them to answer directly to this Charge. I add,

4. If the Alteration made under *K. James I.* was only to regulate the Discipline and not to change the Doctrine; then it

follows, that the Church of *England* does not even yet maintain the Ministers Authority to be Essential. It is granted that this was not the Church's Doctrine before the *Hampton-Court* Conference. And if the Discipline may be altered, without changing the Doctrine of the Church, as it's plain that it may, because the Discipline was altered by those who did not change their Principles in this particular ; then we cannot conclude the Church's Doctrine to be changed by that Alteration. And so indeed Archbishop *Abbot*, Bishop *Cousins*, Mr. *Mason*, Mr. *Thorn-dike*, appear to have understood the Church's Judgment to have continued still the same that it was known to be under Q. *Elizabeth* ; in that they wrote and spake of this Matter just as had been done before.

5. As the first Confirmation which that Rubric had by any of our Synods was in the Convocation of 1661. so they only confirmed the Rule by their Synodical Authority, but made no new Declaration as to the Doctrine of the Church, (p. 24, 25.) And therefore,

6. Lastly, Take the Rubrics as they stand now, and every impartial Person may observe, that the not declaring the Ministers Authority Essential, when the Prevalency of the contrary Opinion call'd for such a Declaration if the Church had changed her Judgment ; and the not requiring expressly that the Persons baptized by Lay-men, when Multitudes of such were known to be in the Land, should be Baptized again ; as is directed in other Cases where Things Essential are wanting : But instead of this, the admitting Persons so baptized, not only to our closest Communion, but to Holy Orders, and to the greatest Dignities of our Church ; without any Complaint from her Governors, or Representations from our Synods down to this very Day : This is such undeniable Evidence of the Church's present Sentiments against the Ministers Authority being Essential to Valid Baptism, as Mr. L. has never yet been able to Reply to. For it is not enough to talk at large of the Articles, Canons, Homilies, &c. which only in general assert the Divine Institution of the Christian Ministry, but have nothing in them relating to this particular Case : These are the particular Considerations by which the Sense and Judgment of the Church of *England* in this Matter must be known. And therefore we are not to wonder at the Disdain and Contempt of those Gentlemen who have no other Reply to make to these Arguments. They will always find that it is much safer to Despise, than to Answer them.

A P P E N D I X.

THE Great Point in Debate about the Sense and Judgment of the Church of *England*, as to the Validity of Lay-Baptism, turns upon what was done in and upon the *Hampton-Court* Conference. For that this Church, before that time, did allow such Baptisms Valid, is not to be disputed. The Whole of the Argument against it, is, That the Rubrick being then alter'd, and a *Lawful Minister* requir'd to Administer even Private Baptism, which was not requir'd before; this amounts to the making and proclaiming of what is done contrary to that Law, to *be a Nullity*. (Bp. Ox. Ch. Conf. p. 58.) To this I have answer'd, That as a Church may alter its Discipline, and regulate any abused Liberties thereby, without altering its Doctrine; so this was the Truth of the Case in the Alteration of the fore-mention'd Rubrick. The Discipline was Regulated without changing the Doctrine. To make this my Answer good, I observe that the contrary Opinion was even at that time the avowed Opinion of the Puritans, and was, as such, vigorously opposed by the Greatest Men in our Church. Had indeed the Great Men been going off from the former Principles, and like some in our Days, begun to think that the Puritans Doctrine was the Truth, and the Churches mistaken: Then I own, that such a Change in Discipline, founded on such a Change of Opinions and Principles

ciples in our Divines, would have given a new Turn to the Sense and Judgment of our Church. But so far were our Clergy, some Puritanical ones only excepted, from inclining to any such new Notions; that the Reader will see by the Authorities which I shall now lay before him, how Riveted and Confirmed our Universities and Clergy, and all our greatest Men were in this Principle, that Lay-Baptism is Valid, altho' Irregular. To this End I shall present him first with, *The Answer of the Vice-Chancellor, the Doctors, both the Proctors, and other the Heads of Houses in the University of Oxford. (Agreeable, undoubtedly, to the joint and uniform Opinion of all the Deans and Chapters, and all other the Learned and Obedient Clergy in the Church of England) to the humble Petition of the Ministers of the Church of England, desiring Reformation of certain Ceremonies and Abuses in the Church.*— At Oxford, Printed by Joseph Barnes, and are to be Sold in Paul's Church-Yard at the Sign of the Crown, by Simon Waterfon, 1603. In this Answer, after the Dedication of it to the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; to the Lord Buckurft, Lord High Treasurer of England, and Chancellor of the University of Oxford; and to the Lord Cecil of Elingden, Principal Secretary to his Majesty, and Chancellor of the University of Cambridge; follows the aforesaid Petition to King James, desiring the Reformation of certain Ceremonies and Abuses, &c. from the Number of more than a Thousand of his Majesty's Ministers and Subjects, all groaning under a Common Burden of Humane Rites and Ceremonies, &c. And among other things desired to be Redress'd, one is this; *Baptism not to be Administred by Women, and so Explained.* In the Answer to which, after the University had set forth the Unreasonableness of these Men's Complaint in General: To this about Baptism by Women they give this Reply, P. 11. "That the Church

" of England, nor the Book of Common-Prayer,
 " doth not prescribe that *Baptism should be Admini-*
 " *stred by Women* ; tho' we deny it not to be Bap-
 " tism, if perchance, *de facto*, it be by them Ad-
 " ministr'd ; *Fieri non debuit, factum valuit*. Here
 is as Solemn Declaration of the Sense of that Uni-
 versity, as to the Validity of such Baptisms, as can,
 I think, be had of such a Matter. And something
 farther may be observed in this Answer, to con-
 firm what I have said as to the Altering the Ru-
 brick, by putting in the Words *Lawful Minister*,
 which was done about the latter End of this Year.
 The University of Oxford, in their General Reply
 concerning Abuses, observe, that such may be either
in the very Constitutions of the Church, or in the Execu-
 tion of the said Constitutions. As to the former, they
 wholly deny any to be ; as to the latter, *Abuses in*
the Execution of our Constitutions they did not absolutely
 deny, p. 8. This about Women's Baptism, now
 complained of, seems to have been one Instance of
 such. The Rubrick had only directed, that *in*
Case of Necessity, some Person present should say the Lord's
Prayer, and then Baptize the Child. This was com-
 monly practis'd by the Women, as most frequently
 present on such Occasions. Hence it seems to
 have happen'd, that the Women *abused* the Power
 permitted in the Rubrick, by an undue *Execution of*
the Constitutions, in doing that which often might
 better have been done by Men, and particularly
 by the Minister. And such an Abuse was capable
 of being regulated, *without altering the Constitutions*
 and Doctrines of the Church. Therefore that
 University rightly observed, that *the Church did not*
prescribe that Baptism should be Administred by Women ;
 and it was no Part or Law of her Constitutions ;
 the University seem rather to Censure the Practice
 as irregular, *Fieri non debet* : It was an Abuse in the
 Execu-

Execution of her Constitutions, and, as such, might be Regulated and Restrained ; yet they avowedly proclaim such Baptism to be Valid ; it is Baptism, if perchance, de facto, it be by them Administred.

This Answer from Oxford was Consented to, and Confirmed by the Vice-Chancellor, and Others the Heads of the University of Cambridge, in a Latin Letter written to the Oxonians, and dated Octob. 7. 1603. In which they first recite a Decree of the Senate of their University, whereby, in Opposition to these Puritanical Principles, it was Ordained, *That whosoever in the University of Cambridge should either in Writing, or Words, or any ways publicly Oppose the Doctrine or Discipline of the Church of England, or any Part thereof, as Established by Publick Laws, he should be debarred from taking any Degree, and be, ipso facto, suspended from whatever Degree he had taken.* This Decree bears date June the 9th. 1603 ; after the Recital of which, they declare their Unanimous Consent and Approbation of the Oxford Answer : *Quorum Consensus, cum tam fraternè concinat, & conspirat cum Apologiâ Oxoniensi, &c.* Here the Reader finds a direct and solemn Attestation of Both the Universities for the *Validity* of Women's Baptism, and consequently of Lay-Baptism. And had any of the Cambridge Clergy at that time advanced such Notions, as many now zealously contend for, they could not have taken their Degrees.

In the latter End of this Year, viz. in the Middle of January following, was the Conference at Hampton-Court, occasioned by the Complaints of the same Sort of Men. The Account of which, written by Bishop Barlow, being very scarce, and therefore not likely to come into all Men's Hands, it may possibly be a Pleasure to the Reader to know something particularly of that Part of it which relates to the Alteration of the Rubrick thereupon.

The

The King opened the Conference, with an Account of some Things that he desired Satisfaction in. Of these, the Third was Private Baptism; if Private for Place, his Majesty thought it agreed with the Use of the Primitive Church. If for Persons, that any but a Lawful Minister might Baptize any where, he utterly disliked; he condemned the Practice as Irregular, and in this Point his Highness grew somewhat Earnest against the Baptizing by Women and Laicks, p. 8. The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; viz. Whitgift, who in Answer to Mr. Cartwright had so largely and strenuously defended the Validity of such Baptisms, shewed his Majesty that the Administration of Baptism by Women and Lay-Persons, was not allowed in the Practice of the Church, but enquired of by Bishops in their Visitations, and censured; neither do the Words in the Book infer any such Meaning, p. 14. Where note, that the Practice of Lay-Baptism may be censured, and wished to be prevented, even when the contrary Practice does not make a Nullity, but is acknowledged to be Valid. This was undeniably Archbishop Whitgift's Sense of this Matter. The King excepted to the Archbishop's Explanation of the Rubrick, urging and pressing the Words of the Book, that they could not but intend a Permission, and suffering of Women and private Persons to Baptize. And when Dr. Babington, Bishop of Worcester, said, That the Words were doubtful, and might be pressed to that Meaning, --- but that the Compilers of the Book did not so intend them, with something more to that Purpose: Dr. Bancroft, Bishop of London, and very soon after Archbishop of Canterbury, replied. That those Learned and Reverend Men, who framed the Book of Common Prayer, intended not by ambiguous Terms to deceive any, but did indeed by those Words intend a Permission of private Persons to baptize in Case of Necessity; whereof their Letters were Witness, some Part whereof he then read;

read ; and withal declared that the same was agreeable to the Practice of the Ancient Church. Urging to that Purpose, both Acts 2. where 3000 were baptized in one Day, which for the Apostles alone to do was impossible, at least improbable ; and besides the Apostles there were then no Bishops and Priests : And also the Authority of Tertullian, and St. Ambrose in the 4th to the Ephesians, plain in that Point ; laying also open the Absurdities and Impieties of their Opinion, who think there is no Necessity of Baptism. Which Word Necessity he so pressed not, as if God without Baptism could not save the Child, but the Case put, That the State of the Infant dying Unbaptized being uncertain, and to God only known ; but if he die Baptized, there is an evident Assurance that it is saved ; Who is he that having any Religion in him, would not speedily by any means, procure his Child to be baptized, and rather ground his Action upon Christ's Promise, than his Omission thereof upon God's secret Judgment ? pag. 15, 16.

His Majesty replied to that Place of the Acts, that it was an Act extraordinary ; neither is it sound reasoning from Things done before a Church be settled and grounded, unto those which are to be performed in a Church stablished and flourishing. That he also maintained the Necessity of Baptism, &c. But this Necessity of Baptism his Majesty so expounded, that it was necessary to be had where it might be lawfully had, id est, ministred by lawful Ministers ; by whom alone, and by no private Person, he thought it might not in any Case be administred ; and yet utterly disliking all Rebaptization, although either Women or Laicks had baptized, p. 18. His Reasoning shews, that although he condemned the Practice, yet he allowed such Baptisms to be valid, or else he could not utterly dislike all Rebaptization in such Cases.

Here the Bishop of Winchester, Dr. Bilson, who has written so excellently well of the perpetual Government of Christ's Church, spake very Learnedly and Earnestly in that Point ; affirming that the denying of private Persons, in Cases of Necessity, to baptize, were to cross all Antiquity, seeing that it had been the ancient and common Practice of the Church, when Ministers at such times could not be got ; and that it was also a Rule agreed upon among Divines, that the Minister is not of the Essence of the Sacrament. His Majesty answered, tho' he be not of the Essence of the Sacrament, yet he is of the Essence of the right and lawful Ministry of the Sacrament ; taking for his Ground, the Commission of Christ to his Disciples, Matt. 28. 20. Go, Preach and Baptize.

The Issue was a Consultation, Whether into the Rubrick of private Baptism which leaves it indifferently to all Laicks or Clergy, the Words Curate or lawful Minister might not be inserted, which was not so much stuck at by the Bishops. The Abuses in Practice had before been complained of and censured, as the Archbishop assured the King ; and therefore they now concur to Restrain them. But still they Retained their former Principles, that in those Cases where Baptism had been Administred by Laymen, or Women, that Baptism was certainly Valid ; and the King so far concurr'd with them, as utterly to dislike all Rebaptization, altho' either Women or Laicks had Baptized. This proves my Remark on the Alteration of this Rubrick to be just and true ; that it was Regulating the Abuses of the Church's Discipline, without changing its Doctrine at all.

And to shew yet further, that I am not mistaken in my Construction of this Alteration, I shall add a farther Account of King James his Sentiments on this Matter, which has been communicated to me by a Learned Friend since the Writing of this Treatise.

tise. To whose Friendship also I owe the Account given above of the Declaration of the Two Universities. But what I have to mention now, is King James his own Account of the Determination of this Hampton-Court Conference. And it is in a little Treatise, call'd, *Cyanea Cantio*, or *Learned Decisions, and most Prudent and Pious Directions for Students in Divinity*, delivered by our late Sovereign of happy Memory, King James, at Whitehall, a few Weeks before his Death; Printed at London, &c. 1629. and Dedicated to King Charles by Dr. Featly; and all this by the Occasion of the Publishing of Mr. Elton his Exposition upon the Commandments, &c. and Mr. Cromton his Answer to Mr. Brearly, &c. These Books Dr. Featly had Licensed, which the King at first blamed him for; and several Things in the Books were disliked. What concerns our present Purpose, stands thus, Pag. 21, 22, 23, 24.

“ Touching Women’s Baptizing in Case of Necessity,
 “ his Majesty in part disliked that which Mr. Crom-
 “ ton delivers, Page 95. That for a Layman, and
 “ much more for a Woman to Baptize in Case of Necessi-
 “ ty, in St. Austin’s Opinion, it is a Pardonable Sin;
 “ tho’ Pardonable, yet a Sin, and the Usurping another’s
 “ Office. The Answer hereunto made, as I take it,
 “ by Mr. Cromton, (for I remember not that I
 “ spake any thing to this Point) was, that in the
 “ Hampton-Court Conference Women’s Baptizing
 “ was utterly condemned; and that thereupon an
 “ Alteration was made in the Book of Common-
 “ Prayer: And whereas before Women were al-
 “ lowed to Baptize in Case of Necessity, in the
 “ Book set out by his Majesty; Baptism in Pri-
 “ vate Houses, in Time of Necessity, is Restrained
 “ to the Minister of the Parish, or any other Law-
 “ ful Minister that can be procured.

“ Against

“ Against this Answer his Majesty excepted,
 “ That neither in the Common-Prayer-Book set out by
 “ King Edward, nor in that by Queen Elizabeth,
 “ there was any mention of Women Baptizing. In
 “ King Edward’s Common-Prayer-Book, Printed An-
 “ no Dom. 1540, I think it should be 1548, in the
 “ Rubrick before Private Baptisms, we read of them that
 “ are to be Baptized in Private Houses in Time of Ne-
 “ cessity ; thus,

“ First, let them that be Present call upon God for
 “ his Grace, and say the Lord’s Prayer, if the Time will
 “ permit ; and then one of them shall name the Child,
 “ and dip it in the Water, &c. After having recited
 “ the Rubricks both before and after the Con-
 “ ference at Hampton-Court, he thus goes on :

“ In all which Passages, in all the several Impressi-
 “ ons of the Books of Common-Prayer, there is nothing
 “ said of a Woman’s Baptizing ; neither to warrant it
 “ to be done, nor to condemn it when it is done. Nei-
 “ ther doth St. Austin simply condemn a Lay-man,
 “ or Woman Baptizing in Case of Necessity, as a
 “ Sin ; but saith either it is no Fault, or a Pardonable one.
 “ His Words, Tom. quarto Lib. 2. contra Epist. Par-
 “ menionis, are : Nulla cogente necessitate si fiat,
 “ alieni muneris usurpatio est, si autem necessitas
 “ urget, aut nullum aut veniale delictum est ; sed
 “ etsi nulla necessitate usurpetur, at a quolibet cui-
 “ libet detur, si datum fuerit, non potest dici non
 “ datum, quamvis rectè dici potest illicitè datum.
 “ And this, said his Majesty, was the Sum of the Re-
 “ solution at Hampton-Court in this Point, howsoever
 “ some have mistaken it. If this was the Sum of
 the Resolution at Hampton-Court, that Baptism, altho’
 when unlawfully Administred, is yet Real, or Valid Bap-
 tism ; and they who have taken it otherwise, have
 mistaken it : Mr. L. makes wretched Work, who
 from

from the Change in the Rubrick, in and upon that Conference, would infer a Nullity, and make void all Baptisms not Administred by a *Lawful Minister*. King James, who was at the Head of it, had, we see, another Sense of it, and took it to be a Restraint of the Practice, without making the Sacrament Invalid ; Regulating the Discipline, but introducing no New Doctrine. Let Mr. Lawrence make what Reply to these Things he thinks fit.

From King James the First's Time, down to our own, this Principle has, I think, met with no considerable Opposition, until Mr. L. and they who set him at Work, shewed their Zeal in advancing some Novelties, which I find are almost every Day increasing. How far the Fathers of our Church have been from Countenancing this New Doctrine, may be seen from a Solemn Declaration which they made of their Sentiments the last Year, when Assembled in Convocation. It runs thus :

Forasmuch as sundry Persons have of late by Preaching, Writing and Discourses, possess'd the Minds of many People in the Communion of our Church, with Doubts and Scruples about the Validity of their Baptism, to their great Trouble and Disquiet ; We the President and Bishops, &c. have thought it Incumbent on us to declare, in Conformity with the Judgment and Practice of the Catholick Church of Christ, and of the Church of England in particular ; that such Persons as have already been Baptized in, or with Water, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, tho' their Baptism was Irregular for want of a Proper Administrator, ought not to be Baptized again. This we do, to prevent, and (to use the Words of Archbishop Whitgift on this very Point) not to bring Confusion into the Church : For let Men
take

take heed that they Usurp not an Office where-
unto they be not called, for God will call them
to an Account for so doing; but to teach a Truth,
and to take a Yoke of Doubtfulness from Men's
Consciences, and to Resist an Error not much dif-
fering from *Donatism* and *Anabaptism*.

This Declaration was sent down from the Upper
to the Lower House of Convocation, on *Wednesday*,
May 14. 1712. And there are two or three just
Remarks to be made on it.

1. That what they Declared, was in Conformity
with the Judgment and Practice of the Catholick Church
of Christ; to which they are no Strangers.

2. To the Church of England in Particular.

3. That the Motives to the making this Decla-
ration were, to Prevent Confusion in the Church, to
Quiet the Doubts and Scruples of Men's Consciences, and
to Resist an Error that comes little short of downright
Heresy, *Donatism* and *Anabaptism*.

4. That they with great Heartiness and Zeal
condemn the *Usurpers* of all such Ministrations,
and tell them very plainly, in the Words of Arch-
bishop *Whitgift*, That God will call them to an Account
for so doing.

It would be some Satisfaction to me if I could
find Reason to believe, that the Violent Oppo-
sers of the Validity of such Irregular Baptisms
were thus sincere, and heartily zealous to prevent
Confusion in the Church of Christ. I cannot easily
be satisfied of this, while I find them more Solli-
citous and Busy with their New Notions, to Di-
sturb, than to Settle Doubtful and Scrupulous Consci-
ences.

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I could

I could shew Dr. B. and Mr. Z. that their Exceptions to the Authorities produced from the Fathers of the Primitive Church are very weak, and of no Force to their Purpose. But I have some Reason to believe, that if there be Occasion for it, this will be done by a much better Hand.

This Declaration was sent down from the Upper to the Lower House of Convocation on Wednesday, 17th. And there are two or three last Remarks to be made on it.

1. That what they Desire, and in Conformity to the Judgment and Practice of the Primitive Church

2. To the Church of England in Parliament.

3. That they resolve to the making this Declaration, to be a further Confirmation in the Church, to the Duty and Example of their Conscience, and

4. That they with great Humility and Zeal

5. That they with great Humility and Zeal

6. That they with great Humility and Zeal

7. That they with great Humility and Zeal

8. That they with great Humility and Zeal

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